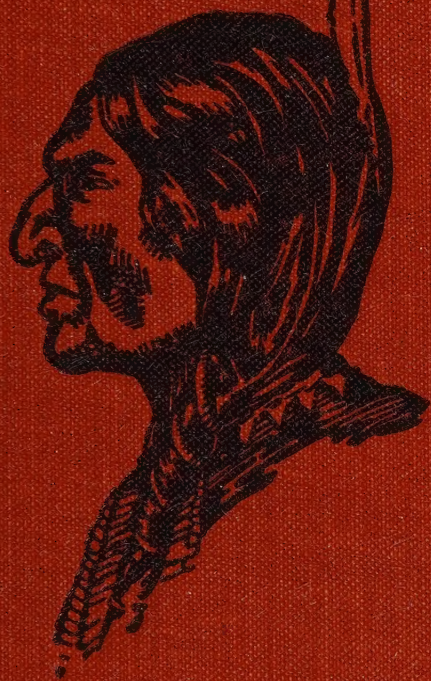


# The Frontier Trail



*A Personal Narrative*  
by  
**COL. HOMER W. WHEELER**  
*Famous Frontiersman*



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To Helen Wheeler Bassett.  
Kind personal regards of  
The Author.

Horace W. Wheeler.

Col. H. D. Carby.  
Retired.

Los Angeles, Calif.

March 9<sup>th</sup> 1925.













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Homer W. Wheeler

Colonel U.S. Cavalry



# THE FRONTIER TRAIL

OR

FROM COWBOY TO COLONEL

---

*An Authentic Narrative of Forty-three  
Years in the Old West as Cattle-  
man, Indian Fighter and  
Army Officer*

---

BY

COLONEL HOMER W. WHEELER

(Retired)

UNITED STATES ARMY

(LATE FIFTH CAVALRY)

---

With An Introduction by

MAJOR-GENERAL JAMES G. HARBORD

ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF

UNITED STATES ARMY

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Published by

TIMES-MIRROR PRESS

Los Angeles

1923

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## DEDICATION

To the loyal officers and men of the Fifth and Eleventh United States Cavalry, with whom, for thirty-eight years, I marched, fought and bivouacked on the Great Plains of the West, this volume is affectionately dedicated by the author.



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## PREFACE



AT THE instance of numerous friends (both in and out of the United States Army), I have attempted to narrate here my experiences as cattleman, post trader, scout, Indian agent and army officer on the Great Plains of the West in the days when the buffalo, the gun-fighter and the Indian occupied the stage in the drama of frontier life.

From 1868, until the last Indian war of 1890, most of my time was spent in advancing the cause of civilization throughout what was known fifty years ago as "The Great American Desert"—that portion of our country extending from eastern Kansas to western Colorado and Wyoming, during which time I was thrown in close contact with the red man. Because of this intimacy as Indian agent and also as inspector—overseeing the distribution of annuities and the issue of beef cattle—I had the opportunity to study the Indian from many different angles. I do not agree with the old saying that "the only good Indian is a dead one." On the contrary, I found the Indian to be keen, upright, truthful and loyal in peace, and anxious to follow the white man's road. All he asked was the opportunity to do so. During the years I was associated with the red man, I also had charge of a company of Indian scouts, numbering one hundred men, and composed of members from many different tribes, and there I obtained an insight into the life of the American Indian which could not possibly have been learned in any other manner. But a short time before many of my scouts had been savages and warpath followers; yet they readily adapted themselves to military discipline and became splendid soldiers.

Had the Government been more liberal with its funds, and provided skilled men to teach the Indian how to farm, till the soil and raise crops, at the same time using tact, patience and kindness, within five years' time from the close of Indian hostilities, these followers of the warpath

could have been made self-supporting, instead of remaining wards of the government. From my own experience I am positive that I could have brought about this change, had I been given the opportunity and the right men to act as teachers. It was preposterous to expect that within a few brief months (even though provided with farming implements and machinery) the untutored savage could change from his nomadic life—living by following the chase—to that of a tiller of the soil, without the necessary teachers to instruct him in the art of husbandry. Yet this is what the Government actually expected of the Indian!

In this work I have endeavored to illustrate the dangers, privations and hardships which were encountered during the Indian troubles of the period from 1868 to 1890, and to present a truthful picture of life in the West as it was at that time—a life which has disappeared as completely as have the countless herds of buffalo which then dotted the Western horizon. There is no longer a frontier within the limits of the United States; and where we trailed the Texas longhorn and scouted for warring Indians, waving fields of grain, orchards, wire fences, irrigating ditches and other evidences of civilization now exist, while cities and towns by the hundred have blotted out forever all traces of the old-time West. It is no small degree of satisfaction to me to realize that I took an active part in helping to bring about this new order of things, and that while I was associated with the Indian, I endeavored, insofar as I had the power, to assist him in getting started along the white man's road.

I hereby acknowledge with cordial thanks the assistance rendered by Mr. George Bird Grinnell, General Jesse M. Lee, General Anson Mills and Gen. Eben Swift through extracts from their writings, touching upon some of the important happenings of the Indian wars. It is my opinion that General Lee has done more to assist the Indian toward adapting the white man's ways than any other individual with whom the red man came in contact.

I also desire to express my thanks to Mr. E. A. Brininstool for his assistance in editing these memoirs and putting them into shape for publication.

Los Angeles, Cal., Sept., 1922.

HOMER W. WHEELER.

## INTRODUCTION

No nation looking to a future can afford to ignore the history and traditions of its past. Especially is this true of our country, now faced with the necessity of absorbing a large alien element.

Events have marched so rapidly in the last thirty years that a generation has arisen which has forgotten that we once had a western frontier, a Great Plains, over which rode the red Indian and roamed the wild buffalo. The history of the Rosebud, the Washita, the Little Big Horn, Sappa Creek, Powder River, and the Arickaree Fork of the Republican, is no longer told by the light of cavalry camp-fires. The generation that knew Custer, Crook, Mackenzie, Sheridan and the Forsythes, is almost gone. The names of Roman Nose, Spotted Tail, Sitting Bull, Dull Knife, Red Cloud, and Crazy Horse—chieftains whose flaunting eagle feathers once meant as much to tens of thousands of the red horsemen of the plains as did the White Plume of Navarre to the French Royalists at Ivry—now stir memories in the hearts of but a few old men.

Fifty-three years ago Homer W. Wheeler, a descendant of Revolutionary stock, left his boyhood home in Vermont, for the Great Plains. He became a part of that wild life, marching, scouting, fighting, raising cattle, riding to the rescue of Sandy Forsythe in the Arickaree fight, known and trusted by Sheridan, Merritt, Crook and Mackenzie. For his volunteer part in the desperate fight on Sappa Creek, Kansas, in April, 1875, he was offered a commission in the Fifth Cavalry, and accepting it, marched, fought and bivouacked with that famous regiment, retiring as a Colonel in September, 1911.

There is no greater living authority on the Plains Indians, none who fought them harder and, when they were



vanquished, did more to civilize and lead them into the best ways of the white man. Thirty years ago this autumn, when I reported to Wheeler as his Second Lieutenant in the Fifth Cavalry, he was one whose character and achievements stood out among those of many gallant officers whose memories are still cherished by those of us who once followed the guidons of that splendid regiment. His story, as told in these pages, is the simple narrative of a fine soldier who knew the people and the scenes of which he writes. It is perhaps our last glimpse of the stirring drama which won the west, in which Time's shadowy curtain is for a moment drawn aside by one who himself played a man's part on that stage.

J. G. HARBORD.

## INTRODUCTORY COMMENT

---

To the United States Government and people the Indian has always been a problem, and the reason for this is plain.

It is impossible for the average civilized man to comprehend the Indian, because for uncounted generations that race has lived and thought in its own way—a way outgrown by our ancestors thousands of years ago. Nevertheless, rarely a man is found who, by temperament, is qualified after experience with them to understand the Indians—and measurably to take their point of view—and one who so understands them can get along easily with them and persuade them to do almost anything that he asks. Col. Homer W. Wheeler is such a man.

It was many years ago, when Col. Wheeler was a simple lieutenant of cavalry and old Ft. Reno was an important military post, that I spent part of a summer there, renewing my acquaintance with the old Fifth Cavalry, many of whose officers and men I had known years before up in Nebraska.

During that visit to Ft. Reno, the now forgotten Ghost Dance excitement was at its height and the Indians, trusting in the prophecy of one of their number, believed that conditions on this earth were to be changed, that the white people and all their works were to be swept away, that those of their own race who had died in past years were to revisit and live upon the earth, and that the vanished buffalo were to reappear and furnish to the Indians the same subsistence that they had given in the distant past. The Indians had faith in their prophet and were not very good-natured.

Long before this Lt. Wheeler, by authority of his Department Commander, had enlisted a troop of scouts among the Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes, whose home was in the Indian Territory, now Oklahoma.

These scouts, having been enlisted and drilled, were now an effective force, understanding something of discipline, having an excellent military bearing, and appearing very creditably on drill. They had been taught the importance of taking care of their arms, accoutrements, horses and horse equipment, and were favorably reported on by Lt. Wheeler's superior officers.

While I was at Ft. Reno, Lt. Wheeler was putting up buildings for his company of scouts who did all the work of construction. They built stables for two hundred horses, saddle rooms for equipment, and a granary. It was an interesting sight to see the scouts at this work and to see their commanding officer instructing them.

I recall particularly a building which was being chinked and mudded up—the method by which log buildings were made tight for winter. Lt. Wheeler was in the thick of the work, showing the Indians how to apply the mud, and he and his Indians were up to their elbows in the soft gray clay which could only be applied with the hands. Lt. Wheeler did not order his men to do the work he had laid out for them. His attitude was that of the leading workman; and when the Indians saw that he himself was doing this manual work, each one of them was anxious to help to do it, and to try to do it as well as his leader.

With such a spirit as this in the head of the command and running down all through it, it is not surprising that this troop of Indian scouts became effective and won the highest praise from all who saw them. The interesting point about them was not that they could do the work, but that their commanding officer had put into them such a spirit that they were eager to do it and took joy and pride in the work.

Col. Wheeler's volume contains much of the history of the early West, little details which throw light on the happenings of those times and so possesses a high value.

GEO. BIRD GRINNELL.



## To Whom It May Concern:

I have read with great interest Col. Wheeler's manuscript, about to be published, and can without hesitation recommend his book to everyone who is interested in the history and development of the West. I am familiar with his work with the Cheyennes, Arapahoes and other Indians. There is no person living who understands the character and traditions of these people better. I have known Col. Wheeler for more than forty years. We both took part in the celebrated Winter Campaign of 1876-77, in which he was conspicuous for his gallant and able services. His description of this campaign and the battle on Powder River with Dull Knife's and Little Wolf's band of Cheyennes Nov. 25, 1876, is related in an interesting way and not exaggerated. His reminiscences of early Western life are true in detail.

He organized, in 1887, Company A, Indian Scouts, numbering 100 men. It was one of two experimental companies with the view of ascertaining whether or not the American Indian would adapt himself to military discipline. In this case the experiment was a success; Lieut. Wheeler succeeded in his efforts to make a good company of it, as few officers in the Army could have done, and was commended by the General of the Army (Gen. Schofield) for his success. I believe Col. Wheeler's book will take well with public libraries and historical societies. His reminiscences of early Western life and the habits and traditions of the Indian are highly entertaining and interesting.

JESSE M. LEE,  
Maj.-Gen. U. S. Army (retired).

Los Angeles, Calif.,  
Aug. 10th, 1922.

Army and Navy Club,  
Washington, D. C.

I have known Col. Homer W. Wheeler for nearly forty-five years. His old comrades have always held him in high esteem, and have known him as a gallant soldier, a true friend and an entertaining companion. His simple story of some of his experiences on the old frontier has all the interests of his ordinary conversation. He writes as well as he talks, and he has an art of his own. My only regret is, as I have told him, that he has not made a larger book of his experiences, as he could easily have done.

EBEN SWIFT,  
Maj.-Gen. U. S. Army.

# THE PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY OF SONS OF THE REVOLUTION

---

## ANCESTOR'S SERVICE

My ancestor's services in assisting in the establishment of American Independence during the War of the Revolution, were as follows:

Corporal Nathan Watkins' company; Colonel Samuel Brewer's regiment, Massachusetts Continental Line; Muster return made agreeable to orders of council of December 26, 1777; residence, Partridgefield, enlisted for town of Northampton. Also Capt. A. Williams' company; Col. Sprout's regiment; Continental army pay accounts for service from May 19, 1777, to May 19, 1780.

## MEMORANDUM OF AUTHORITY FOR ABOVE STATEMENT

Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War, Volume I, Page 393.

## ADDITIONAL FACTS

Elias Babcock, corporal. It is said that he was in the battle of Saratoga, served through the Carolinas with Gen. Gates' army. He was also at the surrender of Cornwallis, and served in many other battles of note.

My great-grandmother informed me that Elias Babcock served seven (7) years as a soldier. He died in his eighty-second year. My great-grandmother died in her ninety-eighth year.

My grandfather, Elias Babcock, Jr., served as a soldier in the War of 1812. He took part in the battle of Plattsburg.





## CHAPTER I

---

### EARLY LIFE; EXPERIENCES IN NEW YORK CITY



WAS born in 1848. Vermont is my native state. When I was about ten years of age my parents removed to Winona, Minn. Winona is an Indian name, and a legend runs that in the long ago, an Indian maiden by that name, one of the most beautiful of her tribe, fled from a white man—a mighty hunter—and flung herself from a projecting cliff into the calmly-flowing river below.

It was at Winona that I saw my first Indian. I observed some red men coming up the river in a canoe, and ran down toward them as they landed. When one of them arose to leave the craft, he picked up a butcher knife, and I, thinking that he meant to scalp me, took to my heels and never stopped running until I reached home.

In the early forties, my great-uncle, David Olmstead, moved the Sioux and other Indian tribes out of Iowa to the northern part of the state of Minnesota. He used to entertain me with stories relating his experiences with the Indians. These thrilling tales made a great impression with me, and gave me an intense interest in the red man.

The county of Olmstead, Minnesota, was named for my uncle. My mother's brother (Babcock) was the first attorney-general of Minnesota. His picture hangs, with that of my great-uncle, in the state capitol building. Another brother, General Orville E. Babcock, served on the staff of Gen. U. S. Grant during the Civil War, and was his secretary during most of his administration as President of the United States. My father was the first representative from Winona county when Minnesota became a state, in 1858.

Because of my mother's health we returned to Vermont where, shortly after, she passed away. After her death I went to live with my Grandmother Wheeler, who resided in Montgomery, my old home. I attended school there for a year or more, and then entered the New Hampton Institute at Fairfax, Vt., which was one of the leading schools of the state. I was to remain there during the absence of my father, who was in the oil regions of Pennsylvania.

While I was at the institute, three or four of my companions, including myself, became imbued with patriotic zeal. The Civil War was upon us, and we went to Burlington, Vt., to enlist. Because of our ages, however (all being under 21), the officer would not enlist us without the consent of our parents or guardians. Had I been allowed to enlist at that time I would have been retired one grade higher—that of a brigadier-general—as all veterans who served in the war as officers or privates were elevated one grade higher by act of Congress.

When the usual vacation time came, I did not return to school, but secured employment with the Vermont Central railroad at St. Albans, loading and unloading freight. After a time I was advanced to the position of freight-checker, taking the bills of lading and checking the freight in and out of the cars.

Upon the return of my father from the oil country, he established himself in business in Montgomery, and requested me to resign my position with the railroad company and come into the store with him. I did so, remaining with him several months. I then entered the Eastman Business College at Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

I completed my course at the college in April, 1866, but instead of returning to Montgomery, as my father had expected of me, I went to New York city to seek employment.

Reaching New York, accompanied by my cousin, Wheeler Clark, who had attended college with me, the

extent of my wealth was a solitary ten-dollar bill. My cousin was not much better off financially.

Our first move was to look up lodgings which would correspond with our small capital. We bought a New York Herald and noted the various hotel "ads." The Frankford House appealed to us. It was situated at the corner of Frankford and William streets. We engaged a room on the top floor at \$3 per week, which included lodging for us both.

As soon as we were located, we began to scour the want columns for work. My cousin, who had been employed in a drug store in Montpelier prior to his entrance into the army as a volunteer, wished a similar position now. He had not yet acquired his twenty-first birthday. I wanted employment in some large establishment where I could start at the bottom and work my way to a position of trust.

We started out early, but at each place visited, found several applicants ahead of us. Falling in line we would wait our turn for an interview. When our turn came, each presented his testimonials, and was called on to state his business qualifications and where he had been previously employed.

Our only papers were our certificates from the Eastman business college, which were well enough so far as they went, but houses wanted experienced help. Two or three places were offered us, but the pay was too meager. We did not expect large salaries, but it was necessary that we receive at least a living wage.

While we were at the Frankford House, an amusing incident occurred. During the night an alarm of fire sounded. We were awakened and hurried to the window. An engine dashed up and stopped at the hydrant on the corner near the hotel. My cousin exclaimed, "We must get out of here; maybe the hotel is on fire." Before I could stop him he had grasped the handle of his trunk and made a break for the stairway near by. Down the first flight he went, trunk

and all. It is a question which reached the bottom of the first landing in advance—he or the trunk. The guests who had been awakened by the fire alarm, jumped from their beds, hearing the terrific crash on the stairway, and came rushing out into the hallway. Due explanations followed, and Wheeler was informed that the fire was in another building in the block.

We continued to hunt for jobs, but without success. Our money was running low, and it was a serious question what we were to do. I went so far as to see how much I could get advanced on my watch at a pawnshop. I did not wish to call on my father for money. My cousin was thinking seriously of enlisting again.

Saturday came, and our resources were so low—only a few dimes left that there seemed but two alternatives—either visit the pawnshop or go to some relatives living on Long Island and tell them of our plight. We had previously called upon them, and Mrs. Webster had invited us to spend a few days there. We now decided to take advantage of the invitation.

The next day found us at Ravenswood. Our cousins greeted us warmly, and asked many questions concerning our life in the city. We were obliged to inform them that we had not been very successful, although we “had two or three places in view which we might accept.” We did not tell them of our financial plight, awaiting a more opportune time.

We were thankful when dinner was announced, as we had had no breakfast, and ate heartily of the good things placed before us. Shortly after dinner, Mrs. Webster called us into her drawing room, where after some conversation, she asked us how long it had been since we had had anything to eat, prior to the meal we had just disposed of. I was about to evade the question, but my cousin was a “truthful James.” The opportune moment had come, and he told Mrs. Webster of our predicament.



She smiled when she learned that we had eaten no breakfast that morning, remarking, "I surmised as much from the amount of food you boys consumed, but it did me good to see you eat, and to know that you had not lost your appetites. You were foolish, however, that you did not tell Mr. Webster in the city of your troubles, as he would have been glad to help you. Now you must remain with us tonight, and in the morning return with him to the city to get your belongings and then come back here. Mr. Webster will give you money to pay your current expenses."

Only one who has had such an experience can appreciate our gratitude. We continued to answer advertisements for help wanted, and Mr. Webster soon gave my cousin employment as assistant bookkeeper in his mercantile house on Monroe street. I procured work as assistant shipping clerk in an old establishment, William Gale, Jr., & Co., silver-smiths, at the corner of Prince and Broadway. I secured the place through the influence of an uncle, who gave me a letter of introduction to Mr. Spalding, of the firm of Spalding & Brown, jewelers, who, in turn, introduced me to the Gale establishment.

After a few months with the William Gale concern, I was promoted to the position of shipping clerk, and had charge of all the porters and errand boys, looked after the repairing and engraving and was responsible for all the deliveries. I remained with this firm until it went out of business. I then secured a position in the quartermaster's department under Gen. Sawtelle, my work being in the transportation office, and was finally placed in charge of Pier 43, North River.

## CHAPTER II

### EXPERIENCES AT FORT WALLACE, KANSAS



IN June, 1868, at the age of nineteen, I decided to go West and "grow up with the country." I had a friend at Fort Wallace, Kansas, who offered me a position, which I accepted. I arrived there the Fourth of July.

Enroute to Fort Wallace I stopped off at Lawrence, Kansas, to visit my uncle, then surveyor-general of the state. When I resumed my journey I happened to be on the same train with General U. S. Grant who, with his staff, was enroute to Denver. At my uncle's suggestion I went into the coach occupied by the general and introduced myself to him. He received me very kindly, and invited me to ride with him to the end of the road, which was then Monument Station.

We arrived there early the following morning. It was only a grading camp. A stage coach was waiting for Gen. Grant and his party, but there was no room in it for me. I made arrangements with a party to take me to Sheridan, a near-by canvas town of some two hundred people, and we reached it by ten o'clock. The only frame building in the place belonged to the Southern Overland Stage Company.

There was no hotel, for everyone was supposed to carry his own blankets. The grading had been completed to that point, but the rails had not yet been laid. There were two or three restaurants—dugouts with canvas roofing. After a meal I started out to see the sights. I entered a saloon where quite a number of men were drinking, among them some colored soldiers of the 38th Infantry, encamped there to guard the railroad workers.

Here a long-haired individual spoke to me. He was dressed in buckskin and carried two revolvers and a knife

in his belt. Knowing me for a "tenderfoot" from my manner and dress, he advised me to "get out o' there," saying it was no place for a boy, as there was likely to be some shooting. Thereupon, with great confidence, I put my hand to my hip pocket where I carried a small 22-caliber pistol, and remarked, "I think I can take care of myself."

The "bad man" asked to look at my gun. I handed it to him and he looked at it for a short time, grinned, and returned it to me, remarking, "Young man, if you'd shoot me with that thar' gun and I ever found it out, I'd kick you all over the prairie."

Soon after this conversation, shooting did commence in earnest, and I did not pause to bid my long-haired acquaintance good-by, but rushed out to seek shelter in the dugout. I was not the only one hunting cover. Two or three men were wounded in the fracas, but none were killed.

I concluded that Sheridan was no place for a tenderfoot, and as I found a wagon going to Pond Creek, just beyond Wallace, which was to carry some graders, I made arrangements to go with them. A short distance outside the town, the coach with General Grant and his party came along. In trying to pass us, our driver, through pure devilment, and being half drunk, as were the graders, reined his mules in front of the coach, thus delaying the general and his party. Finally tiring of this amusement, they allowed the coach to pass, the graders shouting at the top of their voices and cheering loudly for Seymour and Vallandigham. Horatio Seymour was the democratic candidate for the presidency; he had formerly been governor of New York State. C. L. Vallandigham was a noted copperhead during the Civil War, and had been a member of Congress from the state of Ohio.

After a while the graders became thirsty and stopped the wagon to take a drink. While doing so, they espied the head of a buffalo about twenty-five yards away. It had been

lying there for some time and was well bleached out. It made a good target to shoot at. Everyone had a six-shooter, so several of the men tried their marksmanship, firing at this skull. They did poor shooting. Being proud of my marksmanship, as I had had quite an amount of practice back in Vermont, I remarked, "You fellows can't shoot; let me try it." I pulled my gun and banged away. Instead of hitting the mark, the pistol flew out of my hand, filling it full of powder. Upon examining the gun, I found that the bullet had left the chamber, passed into the barrel and burst it. In those days we had no metallic cartridges, and in loading the pistol I did not put in a sufficient amount of powder to force the ball out of the barrel. This was the gun with which I was going to defend myself in the Sheridan saloon! This pistol was given to me by my uncle, who captured it at the battle of Wilson Creek, Missouri, August 9th and 10th, 1861, where General Lyon was killed.

We arrived at Wallace without further incidents of interest occurring, and the graders went on to Pond Creek.

I found my cousin, V. L. Todd, and he was glad to see me. He had been a clerk during the war at General Grant's headquarters at City Point, Va.

The post at Wallace had been established the preceding year (1867) by Brevet Brigadier-General H. C. Bankhead, captain of the Fifth Infantry, who was in command. It was situated at the headwaters of the Smoky Hill river, on the Overland Trail to California, completing a chain of four posts (Riley, Harker, Hayes and Wallace) between the Missouri river and Denver, Colo., a distance of about 700 miles. It was near a much-traveled trail used by the red men on their trips back and forth from the Indian Territory to the north. It traversed a wonderful hunting ground. On their annual hunting trips, the Indians of the north and south met in Western Kansas for trading and making treaties. This trail was used for the last time in the autumn of





Getting Ready for the Knudsen, Wheeler's Ranch, Wallace, Kansas. Blaud, "H. W. W."



1878, when the Cheyenne Indians broke away from their agency in the Indian Territory and escaped north over it, killing Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis of the 19th Infantry, in a fight near Wallace.

When I went to Wallace the country was a vast wilderness. Engagements with the Indians were quite frequent. It was a common occurrence for them to run off stock, attack wagon trains, murder emigrants and run in the mail coaches. At that time, the only man who really knew anything about the country was William Comstock, the post guide and interpreter. He was later killed by Indians. I accompanied Comstock on many hunting trips and thus became familiar with the surrounding country, gaining much information also about the characteristics and peculiarities of the Indians, which proved of immense value to me in later years. Had Comstock lived, he would have become as renowned as did his friend, William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill).

I met both Cody and James B. Hickok (Wild Bill) at Wallace when they were in the employ of the Government as scouts, and kept in touch with them for several years. I saw Colonel Cody for the last time at the San Francisco Exposition in 1915.

## CHAPTER III

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### WILLIAM COMSTOCK, THE NOTED SCOUT



WILLIAM COMSTOCK was employed in 1868 in the government service at Fort Wallace as chief scout and interpreter. He was born in Wisconsin, of good parentage, and left home at an early age. I met his brother-in-law, who was a judge in Nebraska, and who resided in Omaha. He came to Wallace to settle Comstock's affairs after his sad death, and was a guest of one of the officers at the post.

Comstock was one of the original Pony Express riders at the time Cody and Wild Bill Hickok were similarly employed. He was the first owner of the Rose Creek ranch, situated on that stream, about eight miles from the post. At that time the land in the western part of Kansas had not been sectionized and the ranch was held by a squatter title "possession." It was a valuable holding, for two or three hundred tons of hay were annually cut there. This was a small gold mine, as it was the only available spot for hay of any consequence in the immediate vicinity of the post. The contractors were receiving from \$20 to \$25 a ton, delivered at the post. Wood was worth fully as much per cord, and had to be hauled thirty or forty miles. This high cost of fodder and fuel was due, in a large measure, to Indian hostilities, as help was very scarce. Everything had to be hauled into the country from long distances.

In 1867, prior to my arrival at Wallace, Comstock had shot and killed the wood contractor. They had some difficulty over a business transaction. The contractor had agreed to pay Comstock a certain amount if he could show where sufficient wood could be cut to fill his contract. Com-



stock showed the man where wood could be cut in various places, one of which was Big Timbers, about forty miles from the post. Several hundred cords were cut and delivered. The contractor failed to pay Comstock, as promised, and it appeared that the latter feared he was to be swindled.

The day prior to the shooting, the post trader received a note from Comstock, stating that on the following morning he would have a "black-tail" for his dinner. The trader thought nothing about the matter, as Comstock frequently brought in game. It appeared that Comstock intended to warn him that trouble was brewing, and took this method of so doing, as they were very friendly. The shooting followed, the contractor falling dead on the porch of the trader's store. This man had often boasted that he was a member of the Quantrill Guerrillas, which sacked Lawrence, Kansas, August 23, 1863, and posed as a "bad man."

The commanding officer of the post had Comstock arrested and turned over to the civil authorities at Fort Hays, Kansas, for trial. When arraigned before the court and asked how he would plead, Comstock answered, "Guilty, sir." The judge immediately asked him if he did not wish to alter his plea. The scout replied, "No, sir." The judge immediately exclaimed, "I discharge you for want of evidence." Comstock smiled, thanked the court and walked out. A horse was waiting for him, which he immediately mounted and rode off into the desert. It was thought that his friends intended to help him escape, and doubtless the court thought that to dismiss the case was the easiest and best way out of the tangle. V. L. Todd, the main witness for the prosecution, related this incident to me. The judge in the case was afterward city editor of the Leavenworth Times and I later knew him well.

Comstock returned to his ranch, but did not dare go in to the post, fearing arrest. Shortly after this episode, Indian troubles began. One of the government teamsters

was killed while hauling rock from the quarry, and some of the settlements were raided.

General Phil Sheridan, the Department Commander, came to the post on a trip. He wanted to see Comstock, and asked the trader if he knew where he could be located. The trader told the general that he thought he could find the scout, so he went out to Comstock's ranch, but the latter would not come in to the post, sending word by Todd that he would meet the general in a certain place, but that he must come out with Mr. Todd and unaccompanied by an orderly. The general laughed and said, "He ought not to be afraid of me, but I will go out and see him." This Sheridan did. Comstock was promised by the general that he would not be molested, which induced him to return to the post, where he was given his old position.

A few months after my arrival at Wallace, Comstock and another scout named Sharp Grover were sent out to see if there were any signs of Indians, and I came very near going with them. About fifty miles from the post they found a friendly band on Solomon river whom they knew, as they belonged to the same tribe into which Sharp Grover had married. While there, a runner came in and notified the chief of the village that Roman Nose and his dog soldiers were raiding the settlements. The chief, whose guests Comstock and Grover were, told them they had better leave the camp, as his young men were greatly excited, and he was afraid he could not control them, expressing a fear that they might harm the two scouts. An Indian's code of honor is to protect his guests, and the chief told him he would do all in his power for their safety, but thought it best for them to leave the camp. Comstock and Grover were anxious to start, in order to report what they had seen and heard.

Thereupon, the chief sent his son and three or four other Indians to escort the scouts from the village. A short dis-

tance out they were joined by several other redskins. The escort left them, but the new arrivals continued on with the white men. As they were riding along, conversing in a friendly manner, two or three of the Indians dropped back and fired on them. Comstock was instantly killed, and Grover was shot through the back and left lung. On looking back and seeing that Comstock had fallen off his horse, Grover dismounted, thinking that possibly his partner was "playing possum." The Indians fled after the shooting, which seemed singular. Some people had an idea that Grover killed Comstock to obtain his position. Another story was that Comstock was perhaps killed that the Indians might obtain possession of a beautiful ivory-handled six-shooter which he had exhibited while in the village, and which caught the fancy of the red men. Grover made his way to the nearest railroad station, whence he was brought in to the post.

General Bankhead sent out a detachment to bring the body of Comstock in to the post, where the remains were properly interred.

Sharp Grover was later killed by a man named Moody, who had charge of the quartermaster's corral, and with whom Grover had quarreled over a halter. The shooting occurred in Pond Creek, Kansas. Grover was in one of the stores, drunk, when Moody came in. Grover made for him, calling him several vile names, whereupon Moody fired and killed him. It was considered a cowardly act, as Grover was not armed, having placed his pistols under the counter when he came into the store. Moody claimed he thought Grover was armed.

Frank Dixon, a half-breed Mexican partner of Comstock, was the next victim to die with his boots on. He and his wife lived on the Rose Creek ranch. At the death of Comstock and Dixon, Mrs. Dixon fell heir to the ranch.

## CHAPTER IV

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### POND CREEK, KANSAS



POND CREEK was a little town of 300 or 400 inhabitants located near Wallace. The Kansas-Pacific railroad was supposed to make this its station, as it was the most desirable place, because of the water. However, when the railroad was completed to this point, the station was located about a mile and a half nearer the post, for the convenience of the fort people, although the water had to be pumped up to the station at considerable expense. When the station was established, the town of Pond Creek disappeared from the map—if indeed it had ever been on it.

Pond Creek started—as most Western towns did at that time—with a bad element. The inhabitants, fortunately, had in their midst a man named John Whiteford, who acted the role of peace-maker. He had been appointed a justice of the peace by the governor of the state, and was the only law the townspeople had. He was naturally sustained by the better element of the community in his efforts to keep the peace. He owned a jewelry store and was a manufacturer of moss agate jewelry. The agates were found in that vicinity, and Whiteford was one of the first jewelers to make articles of that description.

Whiteford killed Frank Dixon one day when the latter attempted to ride a broncho into his store. He also killed a colored soldier who had broken into one of the stores and resisted arrest. He was said to have killed one other person, and wounded two or three more. He certainly administered the law himself. He was a Christian gentleman, and belonged to the Episcopal church. He was a terror to

the tough element, but had the respect of all law-abiding people.

Pond Creek was probably one of the best conducted towns in the West, due almost entirely to John Whiteford's efforts. He performed all his executions with an old Civil war Enfield rifle, which never missed fire.

It was said that Whiteford came from Arkansas, where he had been a United States marshal during the Civil War. When Pond Creek was abandoned, I believe he went to Manhattan, Kansas, and later represented that county in the legislature. His daughter, a very bright woman, was at one time state librarian.



## CHAPTER V

### THE BEECHER ISLAND FIGHT



IN September, 1868, I accompanied the expedition of Captain Henry K. Bankhead, brevet colonel, from Fort Wallace to the rescue of Forsyth's and Beecher's Scouts, who were besieged on the Arickaree Fork of the Republican river nine days by Cheyenne Indians.

These scouts were organized by Forsyth and Beecher at Forts Harker and Hays, Kansas, by order of General Phil Sheridan dated "Fort Harker, Kansas, August 24, 1868." Major Forsyth, brevet colonel U. S. Army, was aide-de-camp to General Sheridan. He had had no Indian experience. Lieutenant Frederick H. Beecher, first lieutenant Third Infantry, and second in command, had seen considerable Indian service. The first sergeant was General Wm. H. H. McCall. He had been colonel of a Pennsylvania regiment in the Civil War, and had been breveted a brigadier-general for gallant services. The surgeon, Dr. J. H. Mooers, a native of my state, Vermont, was a practicing physician at Hays City. It is my recollection that the scouts came to Wallace to co-operate with Colonel Bankhead, the commanding officer.

They remained at the post about two days, and I asked Lieutenant Beecher if I might join them. He gave me permission, providing I had a horse.

The evening following the arrival of the scouts at Wallace, information was received that a mule train encamped near Sheridan had been attacked and run off by Indians. At that time, Sheridan was the terminus of the Kansas-Pacific railroad, whence all freight for Colorado and New Mexico

was shipped by mule and bull trains. The stolen mules belonged to Mr. Moore, post trader at Fort Union, New Mexico, and was composed of animals making up one of the largest trains in the freighting business on the Plains. There were about forty wagons (with trails) of ten and twelve mules each, the hauling capacity of the vehicles being about twelve thousand pounds to each wagon, with its trail.

The scouts moved out at once for Sheridan. To my great disappointment I was left behind. Upon arriving at Sheridan, it was discovered that two of the Mexican teamsters with the Moore outfit had been killed and scalped, and a number of the mules driven off.

After a careful examination of the ground by the scouts, the conclusion was reached that the attack had been made by a war party of about twenty-five Indians. The trail was followed until dark, when the scouts camped, and the following morning continued their advance. In a few hours the trail disappeared.

A consultation was held, in which Sharp Grover, the guide, Beecher and McCall took part. They agreed that the Indians had seen them, and had scattered on the trail to throw pursuers off the scent.

The general direction of the trail was to the north, toward the Republican river. It was thereupon decided to push on to the river and search for the trail in every direction, they arriving there on the fifth day out of Wallace. There they found a wicki-up which had evidently been occupied by two dismounted Indians the previous night. They took the trail of the two warriors and followed it a short distance, finding a place where three Indians had been encamped within twenty-four hours. Following this trail, they ran into a larger one made by a small war party. On the advice of Sharp Grover these Indians were not pursued.

The scouts struck smaller trails from this time on, which gradually assumed the proportions of a larger war party,

and was easily followed. It led up the forks of the Republican river, whence it crossed to the north bank of the stream, gradually increasing in size until it assumed the proportions of a well-beaten road, over which had been driven many ponies and loaded travois, showing that a large Indian village had passed.

Arriving at the Arickaree fork of the Republican, the trail led up stream on the south bank. Camp was made at dark and the pursuit resumed at daybreak. Thus far not an Indian had been seen. In the afternoon comparatively fresh pony droppings were seen, but still no Indians.

About four o'clock on the afternoon of September 16th, as the scouts followed a torturous trail, winding in and out among wild plum thickets and alders, they came into a small well-grassed valley, where the land sloped gently down to the stream, while on the opposite bank the land was comparatively level for about three-fourths of a mile, terminating in a line of low hills or bluffs, forty or fifty feet high which shut out the view of the plains from that direction.

As the grazing was good at this point, the scouts decided to go into camp. Their horses were badly in need of both feed and rest, and the command felt confident that before the close of another day they would encounter Indians. On the bank of the stream, the scouts were opposite a flat plateau which formed a small island by the overflow of the stream in flood season. At this time of the year, however, but a few inches of water flowed in the bed of the stream, which divided at the upper end of the island and meandered slowly by on each side, joining the main stream a few hundred yards below. The width of the island was perhaps twenty yards. A solitary cottonwood tree was growing at the lower end, and the island itself was covered with a growth of stunted bushes.

Sentries were posted, and there was no alarm during the night, but just before daybreak, Forsyth, who had kept

vigilant watch during most of the night, happened to be standing by one of the sentries, and the two men saw, silhouetted against the skyline, the feathered head-dress of an Indian. The crack of the sentry's rifle was echoed by a whoop from a small party of Indians, who dashed out toward the horse herd, rattling bells, dry hides, buffalo skins and beating Indian drums, accompanied by yells such as only an Indian could give. It was evidently the intention of the Indians to stampede the horses, thus dismounting the scouts. They succeeded in running off two horses and two pack mules, but these carried all the medical stores of the command, and extra ammunition.

At the first shot, every man sprang to action. A sharp exchange of shots and the little band of horse thieves were driven away, losing one of their number. At the suggestion of Sharp Grover the command was ordered to lead their horses to the island, just in front of them (which the Indians had failed to occupy) and tie the animals to the bushes. The men then began to entrench themselves.

The scouts had nothing with which to dig but their hands, cups, plates and knives, so they were some time getting under shelter. At first all they accomplished was scooping out the sand and making a place large enough for a man to lie in. During this time nearly all the casualties occurred. The horses were all killed within the first hour. Lieutenant Beecher and Dr. Mooers were the first to fall, seriously wounded, both dying later. The doctor was shot in the head and Beecher in the side. Forsyth was seriously wounded—twice in the leg and once in the head, but never lost his courage for an instant, thereby serving as an example to the others. A man named Farley and his young son, a mere boy, took an active part in the combat. They were the two best shots in the command, and were entrenched on a point of the island about seventy yards from the others, in a commanding position. Both were wounded

early in the engagement—the father seriously, through the thigh, and the son in the shoulder. Both continued to fight, however, without mentioning their injuries, as long as there was an Indian to shoot at, although several times the Indians tried to drive them from their cover. It was said that they killed the chief, Roman Nose, and the head medicine man, in one of the charges.\*

Medicine men, however, rarely go into a battle, but remain near by “making medicine” to encourage the others. The elder Farley submitted to the amputation of his limb upon the arrival of the relief party, but died from the operation, his age being against his recovery.

The first night of the battle, two of the scouts, Jack Stillwell and “Avalanche” Dave Trudeau (the latter so-called because he christened the army ambulance an “avalanche”) volunteered to try and slip through the Indian lines and go for relief. They moved out about midnight, but succeeded in getting only a short distance, where they remained in hiding the next day at the head of a gulch. The Indians were so near that their conversation was easily heard. The two scouts were obliged to eat very sparingly, as they carried with them only a few strips of horse meat, but luckily they had full canteens of water. In reality, these two couriers suffered very little from want of food, but had to remain in such a cramped position, for fear of discovery, that it was almost unendurable. It seems strange and almost incredible, that the Indians did not discover them. A special Providence must have protected and guarded them. They took great precautions not to be seen when they left the island, crawling many yards on their hands and knees, then taking off their boots and walking backwards in stocking feet, to the point where they remained in hiding at daybreak. It was expected that if their

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\*It was not positively known for some time after the battle that Roman Nose was the head chief in the Beecher Island fight, although it was supposed that a great chief had been killed.



trail were discovered it would be taken for that of moccasined feet. The two men also wore their blankets Indian fashion.

The second night they made much better progress, but again sought cover at dawn, hiding under the bank of a small stream. When darkness had fallen, they moved out again, walking all night and a portion of the next day, stopping occasionally for a brief rest. By this time they were out on the open prairie and so far away from the hostiles that there was little danger. They reached the stage road station of Cheyenne Wells, west of Wallace, a little before sundown, and notified Colonel Carpenter who was camped there with his two troops of the Tenth (colored) cavalry, that the scouts were corraled by Indians.

Immediately upon receipt of this information, Carpenter moved out, and arrived at the scene of action on the ninth day of the siege. No Indians had been seen by the besieged men for two or three days prior to the arrival of the rescuing party. The wounded had received no medical attention until Colonel Carpenter arrived. They had suffered intensely, and to add to their misery and discomfort, gangrene had set in, and their wounds were in a terrible condition. They had no way to relieve their suffering save by the application of cold water of which, fortunately there was an abundant supply. During the siege the scouts had had nothing to eat but strips of meat cut from their dead horses, and this soon became putrid and offensive.

The couriers, Stillwell and Trudeau, remained at Cheyenne Wells until the overland stage-coach from Denver came along, enroute east. Meantime they secured food and rest. The following night they reached Wallace about 11 o'clock. Their feet were in a terrible condition. Walking in their stocking feet they had stepped on prickly-pear thorns, which had entered the flesh, causing wounds which had commenced to suppurate, so they were obliged to discard their boots

and tear strips off the blankets with which to bind up their feet.

The post commander, Col. Henry Bankhead, and some of the other officers, happened to be in the post trader's store when the stage arrived from the west with the two scouts. I was the assistant postmaster, and had to go through the way mail sacks and distribute the mail, which explains my presence in the store at that hour of the night.

The colonel at once made preparations to go to Forsyth's rescue. He dispatched his orderly for the officers, and when they arrived at the adjutant's office, he gave them instructions. A clerk in the commissary department, Richard Blake, and myself, were the only ones present who had ever been in that part of the country where the scouts were besieged. I had been there with William Comstock on a hunting trip. So Blake and I were taken along by Colonel Bankhead.

We started before daybreak, the soldiers riding in the six-mule wagons. Stillwell and Trudeau accompanied us, but, owing to the condition of their feet, rode in the ambulance. We reached the battleground a few hours after Colonel Carpenter. Two more scouts, Donovan and Pliley, had been dispatched by Forsyth from the island on the third night of the siege, and being unobserved by the Indians, they had made their way to Fort Wallace. When they arrived there they found that Colonel Bankhead had already gone, whereupon Donovan, with others, had started on the return journey. Fortunately for Carpenter, Donovan had struck Carpenter's trail and followed it to the island. We, with Bankhead, had to march about 125 miles; Carpenter a shorter distance. Both deserve great credit for their prompt action.

The killed and wounded numbered about twenty. Forsyth reported thirty-five Indians killed, and believed that many more had been carried away, dead or wounded, on

their horses, to which they were tied.\* Those of the scouts who had been killed—four in number—were buried before we arrived. This was necessary, as the bodies had commenced to decompose.

As soon as possible the survivors were taken back to Fort Wallace. The seriously wounded rode in the ambulance. It took us four days to return to the post, while but a few hours over two days had been consumed in reaching the battlefield. Our progress was slow, because there were no roads, and the jolting of the ambulance over the prairie made hard traveling for the wounded. Every care was taken for their comfort, however. Forsyth was breveted a brigadier-general in the army for his gallant conduct in this combat. He never fully recovered from the wounds he received. One of the bullets grazed his forehead, slightly fracturing the skull, resulting in frequent severe headaches. He died October 27, 1915.

Jack Stillwell, one of the scouts who started for relief with Trudeau the first night of the siege, was barely twenty-one years of age, intelligent and ambitious. He afterward studied law and grew up with the great West. I had the pleasure of meeting and shaking hands with him at Reno City, Oklahoma, in 1890. He was a territorial judge at the time. He died several years ago.

Trudeau was the last man one could expect to volunteer for such a hazardous undertaking. He had been the butt of everyone's jokes in the command, but after his daring trip was looked upon with great respect by all who were informed regarding it. After the scouts were disbanded he was employed in the quartermaster's corral at Wallace for

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\*It was the custom of the Indians when hunting buffalo or going into a fight, to ride bareback. They would place a lariat around the pony, toward the withers, pressing their knees up under the rope to ride more securely. If wounded or killed in a fight, they would thus be carried off the field, instead of falling into the hands of the enemy. Indians have a horror of being left on a battlefield wounded or dead, for fear of being scalped, which they believe prevents their entrance to the Happy Hunting Grounds.

many months, but finally went to Arizona, where I lost track of him. He was a much older man than Stillwell.

A few months after the Beecher Island fight, Captain Butler of the 5th Infantry, with his company, was sent out to recover the bodies of those that had been buried at the scene of the battle. He found only the bodies of Farley and a scout named Culver. The graves of Lieutenant Beecher and Dr. Mooers were empty. Captain Butler surprised an Indian village near the scene of the fight, and gave them battle. He had a howitzer along. The Indians had little use for a gun of such proportions, and scampered out of range. Captain Butler brought back to the post the bodies of Farley and Culver, which were buried there.

I remember Lieut. Frederick H. Beecher, 3d Infantry, very well. He was a nephew of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, the noted Brooklyn divine, and was wounded in the battle of Gettysburg so severely that he was lame for the rest of his life. He had charge of the scouts in Western Kansas and had a roving commission. Beecher, with the scouts Comstock and Sharp Grover, brought quite a band of Indians into Wallace shortly after my arrival at that post. A goodly number of the warriors came into the post trader's store for a friendly pow-wow and to trade. We purchased buffalo robes of them for twelve or fifteen pint cups of sugar. On the occasion of which I speak, Beecher and the two scouts were with the Indians in the store, all squatted on the floor smoking the peace pipe, which was passed around, each one taking a few whiffs. Grover, who was about half Indian, was doing the interpreting. Beecher asked an Indian for a pair of moccasins, saying that he was lame and his feet hurt him. He showed where he was wounded. He got the moccasins, and in return gave the Indian some tobacco.

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NOTE: The foregoing account of the Beecher Island fight was written, for the most part, before I had read any other description of the battle by those who had participated therein. No two stories seem to agree wholly. I believe my version of the fight to be as accurate as any account in print, as I gained my information from Sharp Grover, the scout, and Trudeau, one of the couriers.



## CHAPTER VI

### MASSACRE OF WOOD-CHOPPERS ON PLUM CREEK



HAD been at Fort Wallace only a few months when some Indians came in to the post, remaining there three or four days at the Government's expense. This was when I first met Lieutenant Beecher. There were about fifty Indians in this band, including a few squaws and papooses. One of the number, Julia Bent, was noted for her great beauty. Her father was an American and an old Indian trader, who built Bent's Fort, a well-known point on the old Santa Fe trail along the Arkansas river.

While these Indians were at the post, Dick Blake, clerk in the trading store, removed his false teeth one day in the presence of several of the redmen. This caused great astonishment among them. All of the Indians insisted upon his repeating this seemingly wonderful feat.

The Indians had been out of the post but a day or so when Mr. Jones, the wood contractor, came in from his camp and reported to the commanding officer that six of his wood-cutters had been killed by the redskins. He told the following story:

He had started a new wood camp about six miles from the old one and had dug a well. When ready to place the pump, he found that he needed a monkey-wrench, and returned to the old camp for it. While returning, he saw about a dozen Indians coming from the direction of the camp he had recently left. As they advanced he observed that they were in their war-paint and carried their guns uncovered, which is not their usual custom when friendly. Their weapons are sheathed in gun covers of buckskin, ornamented with beads and fringes.



Jones was riding a very good horse, and his first impulse was to try and outride the savages. The animal, however, was wearied from travel, and Jones was fearful of the outcome. He came to the conclusion that if the Indians were not friendly he would have to make the best of a bad situation.

As he rode up over a ridge where he could look down on his camp, he saw the bodies of his six wood-choppers lying on the ground. The Indians saw him and started for him. He motioned for them to halt, and one of the Indians then came forward for a parley. As the lone Indian came up on Jones' left, saying, "How, how, cola" (friend), he pulled his revolver and shot the redskin dead. He then wheeled his horse and made a run for his life, with the yelling, maddened redskins in full pursuit. Jones held his own for a time, but could feel his animal failing under him, so he headed for a dry creek bed, covered with wild plum trees. He reached this cover safely, where he quickly dismounted and turned his Winchester on the advancing savages. By running rapidly from point to point, discharging his rifle and six-shooter in rapid succession, he managed to keep the Indians at a distance, they imagining no doubt, from the rapidity of the shooting, that Jones was among friends. He was quite positive that he had killed two of them and wounded others.

Finally the Indians withdrew, and Jones then rode cautiously back to his stricken wood camp. Appearances indicated that the Indians had approached under the pretense of being friendly, and the choppers had given them both food and water, being finally caught off their guard and massacred—for there were no indications whatever that they had made any sort of defense.

Jones' escape was miraculous, as one shot grazed his temple, raising a huge welt; two or three bullets passed through his clothing and one bullet chipped a piece out of the handle of his six-shooter.

There being no cavalry at the post, the commanding officer sent out a company of infantry to bring the bodies back to the post, where we buried them. The wood-choppers at the other camp were not molested, as they observed the Indians and were prepared to give them a hot reception.

It was generally supposed that these were the same Indians who had been at Fort Wallace just a few days previously. This sad occurrence started hostilities which lasted several months.

## CHAPTER VII

### CARRYING IMPORTANT DISPATCHES



AS I now look back, I think the most hazardous trip of my plains career was carrying dispatches from Colonel Bankhead at Fort Wallace to Colonel Bradley, who was encamped on the Frenchman's fork of the Republican river, a distance of 100 miles, and through a hostile country, of which I had been over but a portion.

The message was to notify the colonel that Indians were raiding the Kansas settlements. I was accompanied by but one companion, Johnny Langford, a half-breed Cherokee Indian, and when we started there was no certainty of our reaching our destination, nor of our ultimate return. However, we were both possessed with a desire for a real hazardous adventure, and further, had been promised \$100 each by Colonel Bankhead to make the trip.

During the first night we ran into a small band of Indians, no doubt belonging to one of the raiding parties. We discovered them through the noise they were creating, for they were evidently celebrating the success of some recent deviltry. As we had "lost no Indians" we went around this camp.

We made the trip in about twenty hours. Upon reaching Colonel Bradley's command, he asked us how soon we could return to Wallace with a message for Colonel Bankhead. We informed him that we were very tired and that our horses must have some rest, as they had been ridden very hard and would need to recuperate several hours before they would be in condition for the return trip.

The colonel said: "I am very anxious to have you return as quickly as possible, as these dispatches are very impor-

tant, and may be the means of saving the lives of a great many settlers. Of course you must have some rest. Now if you will be ready to return in four or five hours, I will give you fresh mounts and \$100 each."

We replied, "All right," and after we had rested several hours and had a good meal, were ready to move on. This, by the way, was the first time in my life that I was ever possessed of such a sum of money at any one time.

We reached Wallace in about twenty-four hours, although on the return my horse became exhausted, and I had to abandon him near Lake Creek. We made the remaining distance, about sixteen miles, relieving each other by alternately riding the other horse. We were fortunate in not encountering any Indians on the return.

In a day or so I returned to the spot where I had left my played-out mount, but found him dead. The saddle equipments had been carried away, and my horse partially cut up and the meat taken. From the pony tracks in the vicinity, we were positive it was the work of Indians.

## CHAPTER VIII

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### THE HANGING OF LANGFORD



SOON after Langford and I had made this trip from Wallace to Colonel Bradley's command, Langford was made an assistant wagon-master at the post. One day while on his way to a sub-station with some stores he had trouble with one of his teamsters named Roche, and killed him. In the fracas Langford was shot through the shoulder. On his return to Wallace, the commanding officer thoroughly investigated the shooting, finally exonerating Langford, as it appeared he had shot Roche in self-defense, Roche firing the first shot and wounding Langford.

Several months later Langford was hanged by a drunken mob led by Roche's brother. Langford was out at Rose Creek ranch cooking for the hay outfit, and was sleeping on the roof of the ranch house. When the mob went to get him (it being in the night), a man named McClure, who had married Mrs. Dixon (mentioned in a previous chapter), called Langford downstairs, but did not inform him that the mob was there. Had he done so there would be a different story to relate. They never would have taken him alive, and the chances were greatly in his favor of either escaping or driving the mob away, as mobs are usually cowardly.

They rushed Langford into a wagon and took him to a lone tree near the stage station to hang him. He told the men very plainly what he thought of them. Not wishing to die with his boots on, he took them off and struck the driver of the wagon over the head with one of them, then tried to jump from the wagon, but failed. Arriving at the lone tree, Langford told them he was not afraid to die, and



that if there was any such thing as coming back to earth and haunting them, he would do it, and make their lives a hell on earth. He then climbed the tree without assistance, attached the rope to one of the limbs, gave an Indian war-hoop and jumped. I do not vouch for this tale, but a man whom I have reason to believe was a member of the mob, told me the story. I do know that two of the gang had no peace of mind as long as I knew them. Whether it was a guilty conscience, or Langford carrying out his threat—who knows?

Six men connected with the Rose Creek ranch—Comstock, Dixon, Sharp Grover, Langford and two others—were killed, the two latter by Indians, while working in the ranch garden. I was the seventh man to take possession of this ranch. Many predicted that I would be the next man to die with my boots on, but up to the present time, their prophecy has not been fulfilled.

## CHAPTER IX

### SCOUTING WITH COLONEL BANKHEAD

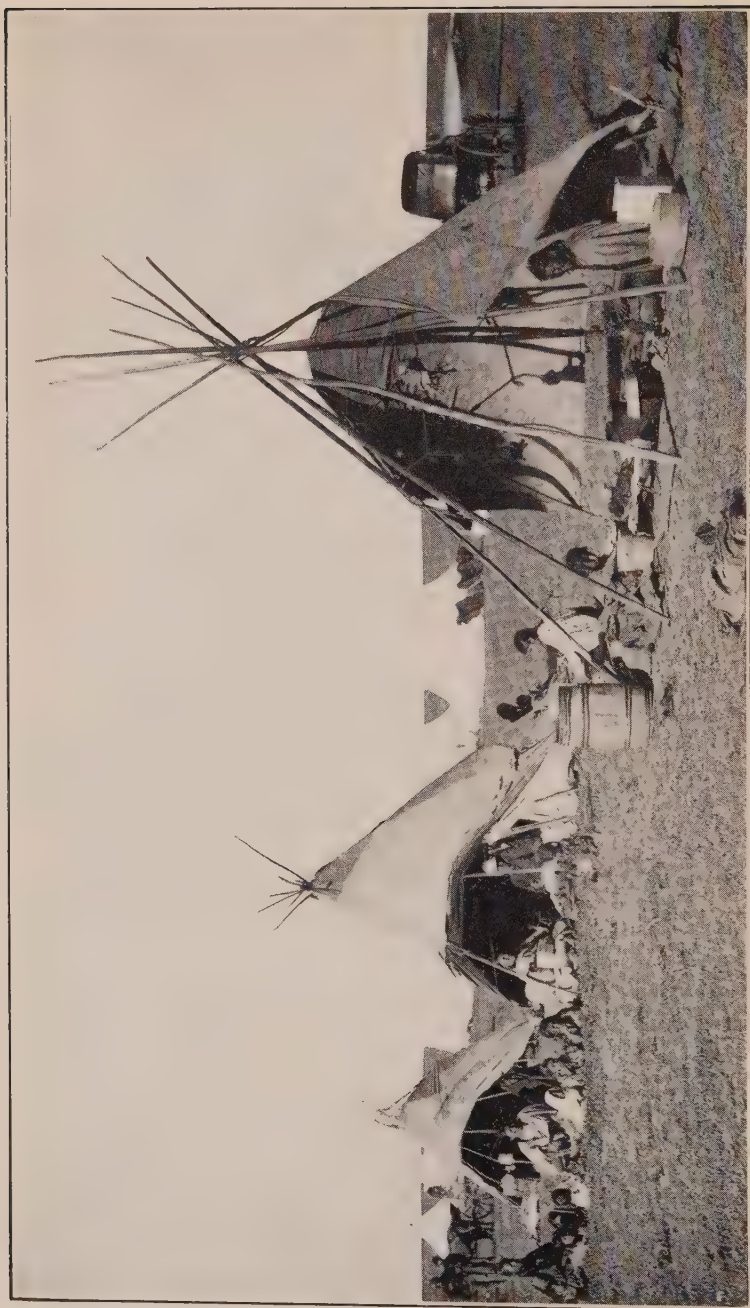


HORTLY after returning from the rescue of Colonel Forsyth's command, we started out on another scout, Col. Henry C. Bankhead, commanding. The command was composed of three companies of the Fifth Infantry, and three troops of the Tenth Cavalry (colored). Our transportation numbered thirty-five six-mule wagons. The infantry rode in the wagons, as they usually did in those days, so they could make better time after Indians.

Arriving at Lake Station, Colorado, we went into camp. During the night a very severe snowstorm came up, the wind blowing from the north, and a number of the tents were blown down. We had to remain two or three days until the storm ceased. It was hard on the men, but much worse on the animals, as they had no shelter, being tied to the wagons.

Upon breaking camp, we expected to reach the headwaters of the Republican river in three or four days' march. We were in a new country; the scouts knew nothing about that section, and we had no maps to guide us—the country had never been mapped. The command suffered for want of water. The cooks found sufficient for cooking purposes by melting the snow, but the poor animals were obliged to go waterless. While in camp they had drunk very little water because of the extreme cold, and when the weather warmed up they became very thirsty. On the morning of the third day after leaving camp, the scouts found a water hole at the head of a sandy gulch. Doubtless the mules also scented the water, as they pricked up their long ears and began to travel faster, finally beginning to trot





Indian Scout Camp, Fort Elliot, Texas.

and then breaking into a gallop. The drivers were having trouble managing them, and it looked very much as if there would be a stampede; but the teamsters finally had their mules under control, aided by the men in the wagons, although two or three wagons had been turned over and a few of the tongues broken.

Upon reaching the water, the mules were unhitched and led down in small bunches to drink, as the water hole was very small—but four or five feet in diameter and about a foot deep. It flowed but a few yards and then disappeared in the sand. The men had considerable trouble leading the animals to the water, and had to pull some of them away by main strength after they had drank as much as was thought best. As it was, a few suffered from colic.

I was riding an Indian pony named "Squaw" which had been captured from the Indians on Sand Creek, Colorado, by Major Graham of the 10th Cavalry. This animal did not appear to be as thirsty as the others, which I accounted for in this way: While grazing, the pony would lap up the snow with the grass, and therefore get considerable moisture with it. The other animals did not do this. Many of the horses tried to eat the snow, which no doubt increased their thirst. Wild horses, and those on the ranges, seemed to be able to go without water much longer than those that depended upon being fed and watered regularly. Range horses will paw the snow away and find food underneath; others will not, but in time necessity teaches them this.

At this water hole there had been quite a large Indian encampment. This must have been about the time of the Forsyth fight on the Arickaree, and no doubt these same Indians were engaged in that affair, for the place where the fight occurred was not very far away.

On the next day's march we came to a stream which we thought was the Republican. We followed it down for a few miles, when to our great surprise, we found we were on



the Forsyth battle ground. Upon this occasion we found the heads of the scouts' dead horses all placed in a peculiar position—undoubtedly the work of the Indians engaged in the Forsyth fight. These heads had been placed in a hollow square, all facing to the north. In the center of this square had been left an opening about six feet wide. On each side of this opening had been placed three or four of the heads, thus forming a wing about eight feet in length. The ground was well packed down around and inside of this square. Indications were that the Indians had returned after the fight, remaining there several days, dancing and celebrating.

From this point we returned to the post, after a march of five or six days. We did not discover any fresh signs of Indians on this scout, although we were gone nearly a month.

## CHAPTER X

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SHERIDAN, KANSAS, IN 1868-'69



SHERIDAN was the terminus of the Kansas-Pacific railroad and remained so for nearly two years. In less than a year it numbered two thousand population.

It was a genuine frontier town. All freight for Colorado and New Mexico, and some for Arizona, was transported from Sheridan to points in those territories by mule and bull-train. On the return trip the trains would bring wool, hides and valuable ores. At times as many as a thousand wagons were camped in the vicinity of Sheridan.

A very bad element congregated there—gamblers, horse thieves, murderers and harlots. Saloons, gambling and dance houses flourished, and scarcely a day passed that there was not a shooting scrape. It was a common saying each morning, "Well, we'll have another man for breakfast!" In time, conditions became so bad that a Committee of Safety was organized, and all the tough characters were notified, in a letter signed by the Committee of Safety, to leave the town within forty-eight hours. Ed. Dizart, secretary of this committee, was afterward employed as a bookkeeper in the trader's store with me.

On the night following the issuance of this letter of warning, three of the worst characters were hanged. There were four desperadoes who were to have been strung up together, but while the noose was being adjusted around the neck of one man, he slipped it over his head in some manner and disappeared in the darkness. After the others had been executed it became unnecessary to have any more hanging bees for some time. The Regulators were com-

posed of the business men, who had to take the law into their own hands to protect themselves.

An incident that happened about this time, forcibly illustrates the conditions which prevailed in Sheridan. An ex-scout named "Hank" Whitney, whom I knew very well, was running a dance hall. One night he was shot in a drunken carousal. The man who did the shooting was immediately arrested by members of the Committee of Safety, and taken into a nearby saloon for trial. While the court was in session, "Hank," having had his wound dressed, entered the "courtroom," and placing a pistol against the back of the prisoner's head, fired. The man jumped up, his head nearly striking the ceiling, and fell dead. "Hank" was at once escorted to the nearest railroad trestle and hanged. Next morning a brief funeral service was held over the bodies, and both men were buried in the same grave.

An incident I saw illustrates how little life was valued in that wild country in those days.

I went down to Sheridan once with some of the scouts. Sharp Grover, the post guide and interpreter, went into a barber shop with me. While there we heard shooting outside. Grover and I went to the door and saw a discharged soldier of the Fifth Cavalry running amuck and shooting in the street. Grover shouted, "Stop that shooting!" The man tauntingly yelled back, "Hunt your hole or I'll kill you!" At the same time he fired upon us. Grover drew his revolver and shot the soldier dead. He then returned to the barber shop and sat down in the chair, remarking, "I don't believe that man will do any more harm."

The commanding officer of the post sent Lieutenant Bache of the Fifth Cavalry down to arrest Grover. He was taken to Wallace and placed in the guard house. I accompanied Lieutenant Bache to Wallace, and at the investigation by the commanding officer, related my version of the affair. Several other witnesses who saw the shooting were called, and Grover was exonerated.

When the town was removed to Kit Carson, Colo., all that remained of the once prosperous Sheridan was the section house, pumping plant and cemetery. There were nearly 100 graves in the cemetery, and with but one or two exceptions, the occupants had died violent deaths. A very few were killed by Indians.

## CHAPTER XI

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### IN CHARGE OF A BULL TRAIN



THE summer of 1869 I had charge of a bull train belonging to Newman & Jones of Leavenworth, Kansas. They were Government contractors and general freighters, hauling stores from the terminus of the Kansas-Pacific railroad. I had eighteen wagons with "trails," each wagon having ten and twelve yoke of oxen attached. These large wagons with their trails each held from ten to twelve thousand pounds of freight.

In ascending steep grades and going through bad places, we would cut off the "trail" and return for it after all the rough spots had been passed. In addition to the driver, there was my assistant and a night herder, as well as a man who drove the "calf-yard.\* The man who drove the lead wagon was the cook, and received extra pay. There were twenty-one men in my outfit. Each driver was furnished with a gun, which he carried in a loop on the near side of his wagon, where he could reach it quickly if Indians were discovered.

Going into camp, a corral was always formed. The first wagon turned to the right, the second to the left, the others bearing in toward each other, stopping in line when about twenty feet apart. The other wagons swung out well to the right and left, and were so driven that the poles overlapped the rear wheels of the preceding wagon, the center wagons having to swing out quite a bit to form the circle, and the rear wagons slightly less. The last two wagons were so driven that they were about the same distance apart as the

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\*Cavayard—caballado—Spanish for "horseherd."



two front ones. These openings were always connected with chains or a rope. These corrals were formed to drive the cattle into when yoking them; for protection from storms or Indian attacks. I have experienced some terrible storms, in which the cattle would become terrified, and many of the wagon covers would be torn to shreds.

On one of my trips from Sheridan to Denver, I made the quickest time on record. I covered the distance—about 230 miles—in eleven and one-half days, making an average of twenty miles a day. Bull trains usually average about twelve miles and mule trains eighteen miles a day. Only grazing is depended on to sustain the cattle and in order to keep the animals in good condition longer drives cannot well be made. Two drives a day were made. At daybreak the night herder drove the cattle into the corral. The bull-whackers arose at once, yoked the cattle and the train moved out. About ten o'clock the train stopped, the bulls were turned out to graze and were given water, if there was any. The cook then got breakfast. Having prepared everything the night before, it was a quick job. About two or three o'clock the train moved on again and completed the day's journey.

I had to make three drives a day. We were loaded mostly with salt in barrels, consigned to Bartell & Co., today the leading grocers of Denver. There was a salt famine at the time, and my employers had contracted to deliver the salt at a specified time. This was the reason for making a forced drive.

My arrival in Denver created considerable excitement. An account of it, and the record-breaking time we made, was published in all the territorial papers. I think the only time I ever felt right proud was on this occasion—riding a fine mule, Mexican spurs at my heels, two guns in my belt, huge sombrero on my head, leading my train through the streets. The only thing I lacked to be a typical wagon-master was long hair.

While enroute on this trip I was accidentally wounded by a bullet from my own rifle. I was sleeping in one of the wagons, and in making up my bed while in a cramped position, I had to remove my Winchester, a 16-shot rifle. I leaned out the front end of the wagon and placed the gun against the wagon-tongue, and when ready to replace the weapon I was obliged to lean well over to reach it. I carelessly grasped the gun by the muzzle, and as I raised it, the hammer struck the wagon-tongue. The rifle was discharged, the bullet in its flight passing through my coat and up through the fleshy part of my arm, very close to my armpit, making quite a bad wound. Had the ball passed a trifle closer, I probably would not be here to tell the tale. I had loaned the weapon to my assistant wagon-master to shoot some antelope, and in ejecting the shell he had brought a loaded cartridge into the barrel, which he failed to remove.

The *Denver News* published quite an account of my train being attacked by Indians, and of my being wounded.

On another trip I camped at Kiowa Springs, about eighty miles from Denver. As we approached the springs we saw that the ranch house had been burned. The ruins were yet smouldering. We found the bodies of a woman and child who had been killed by the Indians. My assistant recognized the woman as a Mrs. Archer. Everything indicated that they had been killed the previous night. We buried the bodies, proceeded on our way, and the following day met Mr. Archer, who had been to Denver for supplies. As I did not have the heart to notify him of his great loss, I asked my assistant to do so, and allowed him to return with Mr. Archer.

Returning from Denver, we camped at Lake Station, 120 miles distant. The first question asked us upon our arrival was, "Did you see any Indians?" A party consisting of a man, his wife, two children and four other men,

were camped there. They told us that Indians had fired on them that morning, and showed me three or four places where bullets had struck the wagon. The men had been working on the Union Pacific railroad, and were on their way to get employment on the Kansas-Pacific.

We did not see an Indian on the whole trip. I relate this incident to show how Indians can roam about and yet not be seen.

## CHAPTER XII

### A TROUBLESOME CATTLE EXPERIENCE



IN MAY, 1870, I had been in the employ of the post trader at Fort Wallace for nearly two years, and had saved a few hundred dollars. I became interested in the Rose Creek ranch buying the property from the widow of Frank Dixon. Today it is one of the largest and best-known ranches in western Kansas.

Soon after, I sublet the contract for supplying the troops at Wallace with fresh beef. The contractor, Chester A. Thomas, of Topeka, furnished me with one hundred and fifty beef cattle, which had been driven from the Cherokee country in southern Kansas. They were worth about \$6,000, and I was to pay for them as the contractor received his pay from the Government. I had had the contract only a short time when a terrific thunder storm came up, stampeding my cattle. My herder, Jack Esmond, stayed with them during the storm, but was not able to keep them together, and they divided. When he had returned them to the corral there were thirty-two head missing. At the time of the stampede, I was hauling hay from the ranch to feed my cattle during the winter. I did not know of the loss until the following morning. We then made preparations to go after them.

Not knowing how long we would be gone, we provided ourselves with food to last a day or two, consisting of bacon, coffee, bread, sugar, salt and matches. These extra rations were not really necessary, as in those days there was plenty of game everywhere.

It was in the fall and the nights were getting chilly, so we each took an extra blanket along, which we strapped to

our saddles. We could not very well follow the trail, it being almost obliterated by the storm of rain and hail. Esmond thought he could go very near the place where the stampede had occurred. The cattle had kept together until an unusually heavy clap of thunder occurred, followed by a vivid flash of lightning, by which Esmond observed that some of the cattle were breaking away. It being impossible to hold the herd, he had kept with the larger portion.

We started out, and after some hours found the trail of the lost cattle and followed it until darkness overtook us. We here made camp, starting out again at daybreak. The cattle were drifting south, as they usually do in a country which is strange to them. In an hour or so we discovered where they had lain down for a rest during the night. It also appeared that when they got up, they had started back toward the post. After trailing them a few miles, we found where they had rested again, and this time, when they started, it was apparently toward the south. This indicated that they were bewildered.

We continued on their trail until nearly dark, expecting to overtake them within a short time, as the trail was getting quite fresh; but just at this time another terrific hail storm broke loose. We were on the open prairie and had to dismount, having all we could do to hold our horses. Some of the hailstones were as large as hens' eggs, and the ground was literally covered with them. This, of course, wiped out the trail again, so we were "up in the air." But as the storm came from the north, we knew the cattle would continue traveling south, and, during the storm, would hasten the speed at which they were going. We figured that we were not many miles from the Arkansas river, and that the cattle would probably go there, as they were headed in that direction. We, therefore, determined to go to the river, which we did not think the herd would try to cross, as it was quite a formidable stream.



We then planned to hunt the country over before returning home. About that time our food had nearly given out, but we found jack rabbits and an antelope or two that had been killed by the hail, so we were all right as long as there was meat in the larder.

At this time the noted Seventh Cavalry, Gen. Custer's regiment, was encamped about one hundred miles north of us, and their horses stampeded in the same storm. Their animals were on the lariat when the storm burst upon them, and one or two men were killed and several injured while trying to prevent the stampede. The injuries were inflicted by flying picket pins. Some of their horses were picked up and brought into Wallace.

We proceeded to the Arkansas river, but saw no signs of our cattle. We discovered, however, that a large herd had passed up the river within the last day or so, and it occurred to me that my steers might have mixed with this herd. I, therefore, decided to follow it. We had gone but a short distance when I observed a pole about four feet high driven into the ground alongside the road. To this a paper was attached, which set forth that some Indians had tried to run off the horses of the party writing the note, and warned any who should read the note to beware of the redskins. It was signed "Hardesty."

We were quite positive that the party ahead of us had placed the notice, and that another herd of cattle or horses was following. Esmond had been a soldier in a Colorado volunteer regiment during the Civil War, serving a great deal of his time in the Arkansas river country. He had been up and down the river several times, escorting wagon trains and scouting, so he was quite familiar with the country. He said we were in what was known as the "Big Bend" of the Arkansas, and that there was a big alkali bottom known as the "Twenty-mile Bottom" between us and Bent's old fort, where he had been stationed, and that we had to

pass it. It was considered dangerous to go through it by day because of the rattlesnakes, buffalo gnats, centipedes, and tarantulas, so travelers usually passed through it at night.

We decided to pursue this course. Before arriving at the Bottom we saw a smoke a little way up the river, of which we were suspicious, and Esmond said he would go ahead and investigate it. I took the horses down to a dry gulch where they could not be seen, and he went forward on foot, taking to the willows and brush to screen his movements. While he was away I unsaddled to give the horses a brief rest. My animal lay down and rolled, and when he got to his feet I observed that he had received a severe puncture in his side from the sharp willow points. The wound bled freely, although it was not dangerous. Esmond soon returned and reported that the smoke was from a campfire, evidently made by the Hardesty outfit, so we continued on our way rejoicing.

We soon came to the Twenty-mile Bottom. As we had a long night ride ahead of us and our horses were tired and hungry, we stopped awhile to allow them to graze, and then moved out again. Soon after midnight I found that I could not stand the strain longer, and exclaimed, "Rattlesnakes and tarantulas be damned!" I was tired and sleepy, too, and said I was going to stop and take a nap. Esmond said he could stand it if I could, so we unsaddled, lariatied our horses and went to sleep. We knew there was no danger from Indians, as they do their deviltry just before dark or at daylight.

Along toward dawn we heard some one helling. It proved to be Mr. Hardesty, the owner of the cattle herd. He was driving two or three head of stock out of the willows. He told me that no strays had come into his herd, and invited us to make ourselves at home; that the grub wagon was on ahead, and when we overtook it to ask the cook for something to eat.

When I first arose I shook one of my blankets and a rattler nearly four feet in length, having five buttons, dropped out. It had apparently crawled into the blankets to keep warm.

At that time we were about eighty miles across country from Fort Wallace. As we were riding Government horses and they were getting rather worn, I concluded to ride to Fort Lyon, Colorado, about thirty miles away, to see if I could get some fresh mounts. If I succeeded, I planned to return and look around again before going home. Hardesty's cook gave us something to eat and we started out. When night came on we were at Bent's old fort, at one time a noted Indian trading station. It had been abandoned for some years.

We had been unsaddled but a short time when we heard some children across the river. This was a great surprise, as we had no idea anyone was near there. Esmond said that he was going to cross the river and see if he could get some coffee. Just below us he pointed out a swimming-hole where the men used to bathe, and in which a man from his troop had been drowned. He said there had formerly been a ford near by, and this we searched for, but did not find. It had been so many years previously that it had been washed out. We decided to cross anyhow, but found the water much deeper than we had expected. We removed our clothing, rolled our shirts and trousers in a bundle and started to ford the stream. As the water grew deeper, we had to hold our bundles high above our heads. Esmond was a little ahead of me, carefully feeling his way, when suddenly he disappeared, bundle and all! He soon came to the surface and struck out for shore, landing safely. I then waded a little further up stream and found the water not quite so deep, but still it was up to my armpits.

After a great deal of trouble in making our way through a network of wild grapevines, we came to a camp. A

woman and her children were there, picking grapes and making wine. Her husband had gone to Los Animas for barrels to hold the wine. She made some coffee and gave us something to eat, also some wine to drink, and it certainly made us feel "away up in the pictures." We remained there awhile, after which she showed us a crossing less dangerous than the one we had just come over. She then warned us to look out for horse-thieves, as there were some in that country.

We returned to where we had left our horses, finding a good ford, but at some little distance from where we had bivouacked. We wanted to move our camp, as it was customary when in the Indian country, or when horse-thieves were around, so that in case of an attack or an attempt to steal our horses, the thieves could not locate us. It had commenced raining, and we moved out a mile or so to an old cemetery, where we could get some shelter by the side of a high wall that was around the burial place. Here we bivouacked in one corner, which protected us quite a little from the storm, and we put in a very good night. Five years after this incident, Fort Lyon, Colorado, was my first station (in 1875), and while I was there I was detailed to exhume the remains in this same cemetery and remove them to the National Cemetery at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

The following morning I started for Fort Lyon to see about securing fresh mounts. Arriving there, I reported to the commanding officer, Col. Richard I. Dodge, then major of the Third Infantry. He had served in the Civil War and had a great deal of Indian experience. I explained to the colonel about losing my cattle, and asked him for remounts. He said he had no horses, but would let me have some mules, stating, however, that I must return them to the post, for if I went to Wallace with the animals it would be the last that he would ever see of them. I had to decline the mules, however, not knowing when I might be able to return them.

In a day or so I started for Wallace, changing my mind about hunting any longer for the lost cattle. The first day we returned to the place where the woman and children were making wine. We were received by the entire family with genuine Western hospitality. A day or so after leaving camp my animal played out, so one of us had to walk. Esmond did most of this, as my feet were in a terrible condition from wearing rubbers. When we reached a point about twenty miles from my ranch, we discovered a cattle trail crossing the road, going toward the railroad. I was quite sure these were my lost cattle, but we could not follow the trail owing to the condition of our animals, so we went in to the post. Not having been able, during the two or three preceding days to ride my exhausted horse, I thought I would try and ride him into the post, as I did not want the quartermaster to know the condition he was in.

The following morning I went to the commanding officer and told him about discovering the cattle trail, and asked him to let me have another mount. He declined, stating that I had killed one of the horses I had been riding. The animal had died in the post corral during the night, but this was the first I had heard of it. Had I known the horse had died that night, I hardly think I should have gone to the commanding officer, much less ask him for another mount. However, he was a very kind man and knew I could ill-afford to lose the cattle, so he relented and let me have two mules. With these I started out again. We found the trail and followed it with some difficulty. Presently we discovered where the cattle had been herded in a deep ravine on Eagle Tail. Apparently they had not been there for several days though, so we concluded they had been driven away, and that it would be a waste of time to hunt further for them.

Accordingly, we proceeded to Cheyenne Wells. At that time the Kansas-Pacific was building its road into Denver.



We inquired at Cheyenne Wells if anyone had picked up some stray cattle, or knew of any being found. One man told us he had heard of some lost cattle being found. He thought they had been driven to Kit Carson. I asked why he thought so, and he said a man lived there who had told him he would pay a good price for all the stray cattle brought in. I told this man if he would help me find my cattle, I would pay him well for his time and trouble. He agreed to accompany us, so we started for Kit Carson. I inquired who this man was that had made such an offer, and my informant stated it was a butcher of the town who supplied meat to the grading camps. When within three or four miles of the place, we met this butcher. I asked him if he had seen or heard of my stray cattle in his country, and gave him the brands. He replied that he had not. We had not proceeded very far before I saw a small herd of cattle grazing, and as we approached them I recognized a dun cow and a steer. I asked the herder to whom the animals belonged, and he said, "A butcher in town." I told him they were stolen cattle and belonged to me, and that I wanted them. He refused to give them up, so I just took them. The herder made a break to pull a gun, but Esmond was too quick for him. He had the herder covered in an instant, and ordered him to put up his gun or there would be a killing right there.

Meantime, the butcher came up and demanded to know the cause of the trouble. I told him the cattle were mine, and that he had lied to me about them. I demanded them, and after some plain talk he acknowledged the cattle had been picked up, and that he had paid the man who had brought them in, believing they belonged to a herd on the Arkansas. He stated further that he had notified the owner, but had not heard from him, and also that he had intended to advertise and register the brands according to the Colorado law, but that through neglect, had failed to do so. He then said I could have the cattle by paying what they had cost him, which, including care, amounted to about \$150. I told the butcher it was a well-known fact that he

was paying men to bring in cattle. He denied this, of course, whereupon the man who had accompanied me from Kit Carson, told the butcher he was a liar—that he had made such offers to him. After some hot words, we parted company and I drove the cattle to a corral in town.

There was where I made a mistake. I should have started home with them, for I could have rushed them out of the Territory before the butcher could have prevented me. The next morning I went to the corral to get my cattle, but found an officer at the gate, who told me I could not take them until I had proven my property, and that further, I would have to pay all expenses pertaining to the care of them. I then engaged a lawyer and got out a writ of replevin, to do which I had to go into a justice's court. The butcher swore he had paid a man \$3 a day for herding the cattle. Incidentally, I heard that the herder was the justice's boy, and had received only \$1.25 for his services. This fact I proved by bringing the boy into his father's court as a witness. I also proved that the butcher had not complied with the Territorial laws in regard to stray stock. I showed the fellow up as he deserved to have been shown, and the court declared that the cattle were mine, but required me to give bond in case anything should arise in the premises, and further, required me to pay the butcher \$125 and the court costs! I protested, but it was useless. By the time I had recovered my cattle they had cost me nearly \$200. Naturally I have always felt that that justice was no friend of mine! A few months after this incident, the butcher's partner was hung by some cattlemen for killing cattle that did not belong to him.

When I came into the service in 1875, my first station was Fort Lyon, Colorado. Happening into the postoffice at Los Animas one day to get some stamps, I recognized my "friend," the butcher. He was the postmaster, and owner of the store—one of the largest in town! I do not think he recognized me, so concluded it was just as well not to renew the acquaintance, as he had "reformed" and become a member of good society.

## CHAPTER XIII

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AN EXCITING ADVENTURE IN MAY, 1870



WHILE herding my beef cattle I was called in to the post to attend to some business connected with my beef contract, remaining away much longer than I intended. On my return, my cattle were not in sight. As they had been in the country but a few days, this worried me considerably. I did not know in which direction they had gone, so commenced to hunt for their trail. While thus occupied, a soldier rode up somewhat excited, and informed me that the post herd which he had in charge were missing, and that he had been looking for them for some time. The post herd was composed of the milch cows which I had loaned the officers and some of the companies. I told the soldier if I found the cows I would drive them in, and requested that he do likewise if he came across my steers.

About a mile from the post I found the trail of my cattle, and followed it as rapidly as possible. It was rather slow work at first for there were a great many cattle tracks around the post. I shortly found a well-defined trail, so made better progress. I finally overtook the cattle seven or eight miles from the post. They were traveling south. They had gone over the bluffs onto some table-land. On returning with the cattle I saw four or five mounted men come out of the head of a deep ravine. They hesitated some minutes, seeming to be consulting one another. Presently others joined them, until there were about twenty riders congregated together. I could not make up my mind if they were friends or foes. It appeared to me, however, that they were foes, as frequently small bands of Indians

roamed through the country. They finally began to advance on me at a rapid gait, some of them forming a semi-circle on each side of the main group. Evidently the movement was to surround me so that I could not escape them. It looked at that distance as if some of them carried lances, which fact convinced me that they were Indians beyond question. I was very badly frightened, and did not know what to do under the circumstances. My first impulse was to make a run for my life, but my horse was not swift, and moreover, was considerably jaded, so I concluded I would have to make a fight and sell my life as dearly as possible. I thought of killing my horse or one of the beeves, and use the carcass as a breastwork, but finally determined to charge the group when they got a little nearer.

I dropped back into the herd to get as much protection as possible in case they fired on me while approaching. I thought if I made a charge, shooting right and left, it might astonish them so that I would be enabled to break through their line. I had read in fiction that men had often saved themselves from death at the hands of Indians by doing some daring act. Why not I, in this case? If my horse were shot under me, I could use him as a barrier. I had heard men say that in a fight with Indians they would save the last cartridge to use on themselves rather than fall into savage hands; but my idea was to use your last shot on your foe, and no doubt you might kill an Indian. There was always a bare chance of an escape, but if unsuccessful, one could fight with any instrument and continue fighting until the Indians killed you. I had two Colt revolvers of heavy caliber and some extra ammunition; was a fair shot and could manipulate my guns with either hand. I pulled my pistols and was all ready to make the effort of my life.

Before moving out of the herd to make the charge, I thought best to take one more good look at the advancing horsemen. It was a good thing I did so, for I then saw they

were soldiers, and who should ride up but Capt. Satterlee Plummer of the Seventh Cavalry. His first greeting was, "Young man, it is a mighty good thing for you that you did not make a run for it, as I should have thought you were a cattle thief and killed you sure." Some of the men were at "advance carbines," which had given me the impression they carried lances; others wore no hats, which had also puzzled me and given me the impression they were Indians. The captain told me the soldier who had been looking for the milch cows had reported that both herds had run off, and that he had seen some horsemen who looked very much like Indians. The commanding officer had, therefore, ordered Capt. Plummer out with his troop, the men with him being all that were in barracks at the time.

He offered to assist me in driving the cattle to the post, but I thanked him and told him it was not necessary. After he left me, however, I commenced to lose my courage, and had a case of "nerves." I did not recover from my fright for a long while.



## CHAPTER XIV

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### EPIDEMIC OF HYDROPHOBIA—WINTER OF 1870-'71



WE HAD another danger to encounter besides Indians, cattle and horse-thieves and gun men, and that was rabies—mostly confined to mad skunks and occasionally a coyote or a prairie wolf. I knew at least five hunters who had been bitten by skunks in camp. All were bitten while asleep.

Joseph Farrell who had been one of my herders, died from hydrophobia. He was one of the finest specimens of manhood I ever saw. One time I saw a hunter who had been brought into the post suffering from skunk-bite, but I did not see him in his convulsions, but was told by those who witnessed it, that it was a terrible spectacle.

The post surgeon told me of a soldier who had come under his observation at Fort Hays, Kansas, who had been bitten by a prairie wolf. When the man was brought into the hospital, there were no indications of any bad effect from the bite, but he was given the usual treatment as a precautionary measure, and was kept in the hospital for fear he might develop some symptoms.

One Sunday morning, at inspection, the commanding officer asked the surgeon why he did not return the man for duty. He was told that excitement might possibly do the man considerable harm, and it was thought best that he should be kept under the immediate supervision of the surgeon. The colonel, who had the reputation of being a martinet, laughed and said, "Mark him for duty; there is no danger." The surgeon replied, "Before returning him for duty, I wish you would give me a written order, so that if anything should arise, I would be relieved of all responsi-

bility in the matter." However, the order was not given. Commanding officers, because of lack of technical education in medical matters, are somewhat cautious of giving instructions regarding the treatment of patients in the hospital, although it is their duty to give orders regarding the general discipline of the hospital.

Later, the doctor was ordered to a post near by on court-martial duty. He was absent only a few days, but on his return found that the soldier had gone on duty. At the next inspection, he saw the man in ranks, and noted an unusual look in his eyes. He, thereupon, told the troop commander that the man should be returned to the hospital at once, which was done. In a very short time he went into convulsions and died.

During the winter of 1867, at Fort Larned, Kansas, a two-company post, an officer and two men of the Third Infantry were bitten by a coyote infected with rabies. The first man to get bitten was walking Post Number One at the guard-house; the second man was bitten while crossing the parade; and the officer was attacked and received a bite in the foot while sitting on his porch steps playing with a child. The maddened animal then jumped through an open window into the hospital, where it was killed. The first victim died. The second soldier and the officer recovered. It was thought probable that the virus was expended upon the trouser-leg of the man on guard, which doubtless saved the lives of the others.


On November 14, 1914, I was a guest at the Hotel Sutter, San Francisco. A Major Thompson, a retired army officer, was staying at the hotel. One day we were discussing old times and he mentioned that he had belonged to the Third Infantry and was stationed one time at Fort Larned. I happened to mention the episode of the mad coyote, and the two soldiers and the officer who had been bitten there. To my great surprise he said, "I am the officer who was

bitten." He had promised to give me a typewritten account of the occurrence, but was taken ill soon after and died. He was a veteran of the Civil War. I had known most of the officers of the Third Infantry, but had never met the Major until 1914. He was buried in the National Cemetery at the Presidio.

## CHAPTER XV

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### SNOWBOUND ON THE KANSAS-PACIFIC

T WAS in December, 1870, that I received my appointment as post trader at Fort Wallace, and had been east to replenish my stock of merchandise. While returning from the trip, we were snowed in for several days at Monument Station on the Kansas-Pacific railroad. Had there not been plenty of buffalo meat awaiting shipment, some of us might have gone hungry.

I had been telling some of my Western experiences, which seemed to interest the passengers. In one of my narratives, I told of an old frontiersman of whom I had been very fond, but who had been killed by Indians only a few months before, about twenty-five miles north of the station. He had been wounded in the Mexican War; was a free state man in the Kansas troubles, served in the Civil War, and had had several encounters with border ruffians and Indians.

In the midst of our conversation, I happened to look out of the window and observed a couple of wagons crossing the prairie toward the station. It was a cold, cheerless morning, and a man was walking beside one of the wagons, evidently to keep warm. As they drew closer, I noticed that this man had a peculiarity in his walk that seemed familiar. I thereupon remarked that he walked like my friend Douglas, one leg being shorter than the other, and said that had I not known my old friend was dead, I would have sworn it was he.

When the wagons drove up to the station, I was dazed and mystified, for I recognized the man as my supposed dead friend Douglas. I rushed out to see him, and from

our greeting one would have thought it was father and son who had been reunited after a long separation. As a matter of fact, he had always called me "his boy."

Douglas informed me that he had left the buffalo range the year before, as the animals were getting rather scarce, and there was no money in buffalo hides. He had removed to Texas and tried raising cotton, but the weevil damaged his crop, and he did not want "any more Texas," so had come back to Kansas and was going to renew hunting as a livelihood.

About three months after this conversation, Douglas was bitten by a skunk while sleeping, and died from hydrophobia. The report that he had been killed by Indians, grew out of the finding of an abandoned camp with a wagon and some cooking utensils, which it was supposed belonged to Douglas, who had been hunting in that part of the country.

After a man had undergone the hardships and exposures which my dear old friend experienced, it seemed rather hard for him to have to die as the result of a bite from a miserable skunk.





From a Painting by E. W. Deming      Indians on the Move—A Dog Travois Goes Rabbit Crazy.



## CHAPTER XVI

### HANGING OF "BUFFALO JOE" NORTH BY A MOB



UFFALO JOE" was a hunter and came from a very good family living at St. Joe, Missouri. I had known him for some time, had had business transactions with him, and had many reasons to know he was a square man.

One Sunday evening in 1873, he came into the post trader's store with a "piece of calico" on his arm, and told me that he wanted to get married. He asked me to take him to the post chaplain, which I did, and he was married. After the ceremony, Joe said to me, "Homer, have you a 'fiver' in your vest pocket?" I happened to have one, and turned it over to him, whereupon he gave it to the chaplain.

Some few months after this, he killed a man named Jones, who formerly had worked on my ranch. Jones was a good worker, but addicted to drink, and when under the influence of liquor, was likely to do almost anything that entered his mind. It seems that he had been showing Mrs. North some attention, whereupon Buffalo Joe killed him.

Shortly afterward a party of buffalo hunters and others were in one of the stores at Fort Wallace drinking, and it was suggested by some of the party—who claimed to be friends of Jones—that they string Buffalo Joe up for the killing of Jones. This they did, hanging him to a telegraph pole near the station. The body remained swinging from the pole until after the passenger train came in the next morning.

As soon as I heard of the hanging, I went to the station. The body had been taken down and was lying in the freight depot, with the rope still encircling the neck. I made arrangements for burial in the post cemetery.

There had been considerable horse-stealing going on, and the proprietor of the store was supposed to be implicated. Horse thieves professing to be hunters, were accustomed to steal animals on the Platte river in Nebraska, drive them down to Dodge City, Kansas, on the Arkansas river, and dispose of them. Then, when they had spent their money, they stole more horses and drove them north. Wallace was the half-way station. This merchant, it was alleged, harbored these thieves enroute—in fact, was their agent—and helped them to dispose of the stolen stock. Inasmuch as Joe North knew of some of their transactions, they were afraid of him, and took this means of getting him out of the way.

In those wild days there was no law. Wallace county was not organized. There were cases where hanging was justifiable, but there was no doubt in the minds of the good people of Wallace, that the hanging of Joe North was cold-blooded murder. I am glad to state that shortly afterward the county was organized and the outlaw band broken up. Wallace then became a law-abiding town.

## CHAPTER XVII

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### SKETCH OF LIFE OF CAPT. GEO. W. GRAHAM, TENTH U. S. CAVALRY



APT. GEO. W. GRAHAM'S troop, with others of his regiment, was stationed at Fort Wallace, Kansas, where I first met him. He had had a wonderful career. When a boy he was employed in driving mules on the tow-path of the White Hall canal, connecting Lake Champlain and the Hudson river.

When the Civil War broke out, Graham was serving a sentence in a penitentiary. Soon thereafter he was pardoned, with others, and enlisted in a New York regiment. He served his enlistment and was employed in the Secret Service of the United States, doing good service in Virginia and the Carolinas. During his service he came under the eye of Gen. Grant, and through him was appointed a lieutenant in the army. My cousin, V. L. Todd, former post trader at Wallace, was employed as clerk at Grant's headquarters, City Point, Va., at the time of Graham's appointment, and assisted him when he was preparing his examination to enter the service.

Lieut. Hammond, Third Cavalry, who was serving in the same squadron with me on the celebrated winter campaign of 1876, asked me one day if I ever knew a Capt. Graham of the 10th Cavalry, to which I replied that I knew him very well. He said Graham was a native of his town, and thereupon related what he knew of Graham's early life. He informed me that his (Hammond's) father was one of the commissioners of the penitentiary in which Graham was serving at the outbreak of the war, and recommended to the



governor of New York state that certain prisoners—Graham among the number—be paroled for good behavior. All of the men enlisted. At the close of the war, to the great surprise of all who knew him, Graham returned home as a captain in the army.

At various times while I was on scouting parties with Graham, he told me some of his history, and I am going to relate some of his experiences and doings while serving in the 10th Cavalry, and of his dismissal from the army, as nearly as I remember them.

He told me that he was from the South, and when the war broke out was living at Charleston, S. C., he then being a lieutenant in the Charleston Cadet Corps; that being a Union man, he resigned and went into the United States service; that he raised a company of mountaineers who equipped and armed themselves, although I think they were regularly enlisted soldiers. Their duties consisted in acting as guides and scouts, making raids into the enemy's country, tearing up the railroads, destroying bridges and running off contraband (slaves). He stated that at the close of the war he had \$30,000, which he had made by enlisting negroes for soldiers to supply the demands of the authorities of the New England states, those authorities being required to furnish a certain quota of troops—based on population—and used this method of securing them. I had heard of this before. Graham said that when he was mustered out of the service, he went to Saratoga Springs, N. Y., where he lost his money playing the races.

While stationed at Wallace, he received the brevet of major for gallantry in an affair with Indians while escorting Gen. Eugene A. Carr—then lieutenant-colonel of the 5th Cavalry—enroute to join his regiment on Beaver Creek, Kansas.

Graham had a good troop and did much good service. He had a way of his own in disciplining his men. Upon one

occasion when I was with him on one of his scouts, two of his men engaged in a lively quarrel. They were brought up before Graham by a non-commissioned officer, and Graham after hearing their versions of the quarrel, sent the sergeant to the wagon-master for a couple of blacksnake whips. Placing one in the hands of each man, he told them to go to work on each other, and put the men in positions where they could use the whips to the best advantage. When Graham thought they were not laying on the lash strenuously enough, he would inform them that if they did not work more rapidly and strike harder, he would have them whipped in a way they would remember, and which would remind them of the old slave days, many of the colored soldiers in those days having been slaves. At this, they would put more energy into the work, and as the whip-lashes began to hurt, the men became "good and mad" at each other, and used the whips most vigorously. When the captain thought they had been sufficiently punished, he stopped them, and asked if they thought they could now behave and be good soldiers. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, he made them shake hands and sent them back to the troop. I was told that at one time a soldier of his command tried to shoot Graham, who afterward made the man a non-commissioned officer!

On one of his scouts, the captain had gone into camp on Sand Creek, Colorado, on the site of the Chivington battle. The Indians tried to run off his horses, but he, with Lieut. Amick and Sergt. Burke, pursued them, recovering all the horses, and in addition, an Indian pony. Three Indians were killed, one of them being "made good" by Burke, who clubbed him with the butt of his carbine. Burke, in the excitement of getting started from the camp, had forgotten his cartridge belt, and had no ammunition. He was the troop quartermaster-sergeant, and could neither read nor write, but he took good care of the troop property. He had

the boxes containing the property marked with hieroglyphics of his own devising, so that he could easily ascertain what each contained. Burke had wonderful strength. I once saw him place his back against the rear wheels of a wagon loaded with forage, take hold of the spokes and raise the wheel off the ground with apparently very little effort. Nobody else was able to do it.

Accompanying Graham, when the Indians tried to run off his horses, was Dr. Turner, the post surgeon. The doctor was greatly interested in "craniometry," and was procuring Indian skulls for the Smithsonian Institute at Washington. He had informed some of the soldiers that if they came across an Indian burying ground, he would like to get some skulls. Quite frequently, in scouting, we would find places where the Indians had placed the bodies of their dead in the trees on scaffolds. After a few months this support would rot and fall down, or the wind would blow it down and the bones would be scattered on the ground.

On the evening after the Indians had tried to run off the horses, Dr. Turner was lying down in his tent, when he heard a scratching on the canvas, and upon inquiring who was there, the reply was, "Sergeant Burke, sir." He was told to enter, the doctor thinking perhaps he wanted some medicine. When the sergeant entered the tent, he carried a gunnysack on his shoulder. Remarking that he had a present for the doctor, he emptied the sack and to the astonishment of the surgeon, out dropped the heads of the three Indians killed in the chase after the horses! They were taken in to the post hospital, prepared, and sent to the Smithsonian Museum.

After Capt. Graham left Wallace, he was tried by court-martial for selling government horses, was convicted and dismissed from the service. He must have had considerable money, for at one time he had in our safe about \$4,000. Afterward he went to Denver, Colorado, and while there must have gone broke, as he tried to rob the Government

paymaster, Major Brooke, at Lake Station, Colorado. The major was enroute to pay off the soldiers who were camped near there, and was making the trip in an ambulance with Captain Irwin of the Sixth Cavalry, commanding officer of the camp, two or three other officers, Nicholas Roberty, manager of the sutler store at Lake Station, Mrs. Roberty and her baby. It appears to have been a part of Graham's plans to frighten the mules so that the ambulance would be overturned into a gulch as they were passing around the head of it. The scheme failed, however, and Graham fired into the ambulance with a shotgun loaded with buckshot. Captain Irwin received most of the charge in the shoulder, but Major Brooke caught one or two of the bullets. Mrs. Roberty was carrying her infant in her lap, with one hand grasping the bows of the ambulance. One of the buckshot passed through her hand. A soldier who was riding with the driver shot at Graham, but was not aware at the time that he had hit him. The mules ran away, but by good handling the driver managed to guide them into camp, where they arrived just about dark. A party was immediately sent back to the scene of the attack, and found Graham badly wounded. A bandit companion, who was with him, escaped. The following morning Graham was put on a train, taken to Denver and placed in the hospital, not being expected to recover. While there he managed to escape, and was at large for some time, but was finally captured in a saloon wearing his favorite disguise—that of a negro. He was recognized by a United States marshal, according to the statements of the newspapers at that time. Graham was tried and sentenced to the penitentiary at Canyon City, Colorado, for a term of years.

With one or two other prisoners he finally escaped from the prison, but some time after was recaptured in a St. Louis park. He had stopped at a roadhouse which was erected for the convenience of freighters. On the morning of his cap-

ture he arose early, going out, no doubt, to ascertain if the road were clear. He carried a Winchester rifle, which he had taken from one of the prison guards when he escaped. He was ordered to surrender, and upon his refusal, was shot through the neck by the posse which had trailed him down and had surrounded the cabin. He was returned to the penitentiary and served out his term, after which he returned to Denver.

Some time after this, I was in Denver with some army officers, attending the fair and races, and found that Graham was there, taking an important part as one of the judges of the horses and the races.

While adjutant and quartermaster for Gen. Eugene A. Carr at Fort McPherson, Nebraska, the general told me the following incident about Graham which occurred in the Beaver Creek fight with Indians in October, 1868, indicating the great bravery and daring of the man.

The general was enroute from Fort Wallace, Kansas, to join his regiment, the 5th Cavalry, supposed to be on Beaver Creek. He was escorted by Capt. Louis H. Carpenter, 10th Cavalry, and two troops of the regiment. I remember very well the occurrence I am about to relate, as I was at Fort Wallace at the time. Moreover, I had heard Captain Graham's version of the affair prior to the time it was related to me by General Carr.

The expedition was camped on the Beaver for the night, and broke camp early in the morning. Graham started out with two troopers to reconnoiter before the command had moved out. His object was to ascertain if he could find any signs of Colonel Royall's command, the latter being in command of the Fifth Cavalry. Graham was moving down the Beaver, and had reached a point which was not beyond the view of the camp, when several Indians suddenly dashed over the hill in his rear, with the apparent intention of cutting him off, and began firing on the party.



Three bullets passed through Graham's clothes, one through his hat, one through his shirt and one through his leggings. The horse of one of the soldiers was shot. Graham was riding a very fine mount known as "Red Eye," which had a very deep chest and a thin barrel—rendering it very difficult to keep a saddle from slipping backward. Red Eye jumped over the bank, which was several feet high, into the creek. The saddle slipped, and kicking clear of it, Graham grasped the horse's mane, hanging on for dear life, finally alighting in the bed of the creek. The horse ran toward the camp and Graham began firing on the Indians. Luckily for him, just as he fell from his horse, Lieut. Amick and his men came up, charged the Indians and drove them off. This quick action of the lieutenant, no doubt saved Graham's life and the lives of his men.

General Carr told me that Graham was one of the bravest men he ever saw; that he often would amuse himself by concealing men in hollows of the ground, taking away their horses, until the Indians came up for them to shoot at, and then charging up with the horses and bringing them off.

Graham lost his life while in the employ of some bankers for whom he was watching a mine near Rosetta, Colorado, to prevent it from being "jumped." He was shot and killed from ambush on his way to Rosetta. It was said he had been warned not to go to the town.

## CHAPTER XVIII

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### MY SECOND CATTLE VENTURE



WHEN I secured the contract to furnish the troops at Wallace with fresh beef, I commenced buying broken-down stock from the emigrants and from Texas herds passing through the country on their way to Colorado and other territories. I usually got them at a very reasonable price, as there was no other place within many miles where they could be otherwise disposed of. The stock I got from emigrants was very good—some of the milch cows being of very fine breed. I used to lend them to the officers and different companies of soldiers. During the year I accumulated nearly one hundred head of stock. They wintered so well, as did also the buffalo and wild horses ranging in the country—thriving on the succulent buffalo grass—that I became convinced western Kansas was destined to be a fine grazing country. I interested my uncle, and he furnished me the funds to go into the cattle business. It was the first herd driven into Wallace county, and mine was the only herd in western Kansas for a number of years. The next herd came into the country in 1875, and was owned by Fred Harvey. That was about the time he established the Harvey eating houses on the Kansas-Pacific and Santa Fe railroads, which are now so popular with the traveling public.

I had much to contend with to keep my cattle on the range. It was not home to them, so they were inclined to stray, and when once they got away they were likely to keep traveling until they were rounded up. There was not another herd or ranch within a hundred miles of me. There were, however, immense herds of buffalo ranging in the

country, and at times they would stampede my stock. Then, too, the Indians killed my cattle and ran off my riding stock. Horse and cattle thieves annoyed me considerably. In addition, there were the cold storms to combat. All these troubles kept me very busy. It was hard to get herders at times, owing to the condition of the country, so I was compelled to go out and hunt stray stock alone. On these occasions, I would scout the surrounding country for miles, and be gone several days at a time. I have encountered storms so severe as to render it uncertain that I would return home safely, if at all. Many times I vowed that if I ever reached the post safely, I would never go out again; but on my return, I would forget all my sufferings, and ere long, start out again. It was by this kind of work that I made the cattle business a success. Had there been other stockmen in the country, conditions would have been much easier as we could have worked together and I would not have had to combat with many of the difficulties alone.

It was in 1872, that my uncle, C. W. Babcock, of Lawrence, Kansas, surveyor-general of that state, furnished me with capital of \$7,500, with which to enter the cattle-raising business in western Kansas. I was to have the general management, paying all the running expenses of the herd, for one-half the increase. The contract was for five years. The cattle were to be purchased in Abilene, Kansas, where immense herds were driven every year for the market from the Lone Star state.

Through a very exciting episode, I came very near not going into the cattle business. The money was turned over to me in Kansas City. Instead of leaving the money in a bank, which I could have done, I thought best to draw it out and take it with me to Abilene, and there deposit it. It was mostly in bills of large denomination, so did not make a very bulky package. I placed it in the inside pocket of my coat—not a very safe place—but my coat could be securely

buttoned, the package could not easily be seen, and I thought I would take the chance of carrying it safely.

I drew the money from the bank one morning and went out to attend to some business. I then returned to my hotel for some luncheon, and immediately thereafter went to the Union depot and purchased my ticket for Abilene. While waiting for the train, I thought of my money, and placed my hand where the package should have been, but it was gone! I was mortified, chagrined and decidedly frightened. Several courses of action immediately rushed through my mind, but the question that bothered me most was, "What will my uncle think and say?" Naturally, I considered that the only thing I could do, under the circumstances, was to tell him of my loss and agree to repay him some day. However, I soon came to my senses. I did not want to report my loss to the police, as it would only create excitement and be noised around, so I went to the driver of the hotel bus and asked him if he had seen or heard anything of a stray pocketbook. He said he had not, and asked me how much money there was in it. When I told him he remarked, "Young man, it seems to me you are taking the matter of losing so much money rather quietly." I replied, "Well, what else can I do?" I told him I did not care to advertise my loss all over the country.

"Maybe you left it in your room at the hotel," he suggested. "Jump in and I'll drive you there right away."

I offered to pay him for the trip, but he would accept nothing. I told the hotel clerk of my loss. He called the maid who had charge of the room I had occupied, but she had seen no pocketbook.

I then went to Peak & Marsh, wholesale drygoods merchants, whom I had visited before going to the hotel to dinner. I told Mr. Marsh of my loss. He was a very excitable man; had known me for some time and had taken great interest in me. He felt my loss keenly, asking if I had taken

off my coat anywhere and laid it down. It then came into my mind that I had removed my coat in the store while washing, and laid it down on a pile of cloth on the counter. I hastened to that particular counter, and there was the lost pocketbook lying serenely between two bolts of cloth! Needless to say, I felt better right away. I purchased a money belt at once, and went on my way rejoicing.

At Abilene, I put up at the Drover's Cottage, where a number of cattlemen were stopping. One of them was Col. King, the largest land owner and cattle raiser in Texas. His wife, known as the "cattle queen" of Texas, is yet living, and owns immense herds of cattle, sheep and horses. Her land holdings are said to be larger than the state of Rhode Island or Delaware. I marched from Brownsville, Texas, to Fort Sam Houston (San Antonio) in 1898, and three days were occupied in passing through her lands.

I found the prices of cattle ranged from \$10 to \$14 per head. I bargained for 627 cows at \$13.25 per head, and 87 long yearlings (cattle less than two years old) at \$7 per head. Also a yoke of cattle for the grub wagon. The total amount was \$8,388. Paying cash to the extent of my means, I drew on my uncle for the balance. The cattle were to be delivered at Brookville, Kansas, on the Union Pacific railroad. I selected cows with big frames, good color and as short horns as possible, out of over 2,000 head. After being cut away from the main herd they did not resemble the same cattle. I intended to turn blooded bulls into the herd to improve the progeny. At Brookville I was offered \$1,500 for my bargain over what the cattle had cost me.

I left Brookville for Wallace, 275 miles distant, by the old Smoky Hill trail. I chose this route because of water and grass. My outfit was composed of three green hands who had come out to join me at Abilene and learn the cattle business. Two of them were from New York city and they were thinking of investing money if they found, after



a little experience, that they liked ranching. I also had two professional cowboys, Asa Lathrop and Joe Edwards; a cook, who was one of my clerks in the store and wanted to make the trip. Billy Sullivan was a good cook, and I had him buy plenty of potatoes, onions, flour, bacon, coffee and dried fruit, but no butter. Bacon grease and flour gravy goes pretty well on bread. Some of the boys said they never did like butter.

There was a reason for this. One day on the drive one of the young men came to me and wanted some butter. I said, "The idea of cowboys eating butter! I never heard of such a thing. They don't even like milk. The next thing I know, you boys will be wanting napkins and finger-bowls."

However, I finally relented and told them they might buy a couple of pounds at the first opportunity. None of the eastern youths were familiar with the saddle and knew nothing about handling stock. The young fellow who carried the butter was riding Kate, the mule. Like all boys just learning the cattle business, these youngsters thought it necessary to wear spurs—the larger the rowels the better, and the more they jingled in walking, the more pleased they were. Allen Clark was the young man carrying the butter. He accidentally stuck his spurs into old Kate, which she resented, and commenced to pitch with much enthusiasm. Over her head went the rider, butter and all. Instead of dropping the package, as he should have done when the mule began to pitch, the greenhorn placed it between himself and his overcoat, which was tied to the saddle-horn. When he was picked up, dazed like, he asked what he had done with the butter. Upon investigation, he discovered that most of it was on his trousers. The other boys howled with delight, but Clark managed to scrape some of the grease off, exclaiming, "There is your damned old butter! I never did care for it anyway." Between laughs, the boys inquired why he hadn't stuck to the mule, whereupon he

earnestly replied: "How could I with all that grease between my legs?"

The cook, Billy Sullivan, never had driven bulls, and walking alongside them did not meet with his approval, so he made reins out of some rope, attached them to the horns of the oxen and guided them sitting on his "throne" in the cook wagon, a perfect picture of contentment. One night we arrived in camp after dark, and Billy had to make some biscuits for supper. He made a mistake and got hold of the pail of wagon dope instead of the lard can. We wondered what was the matter with the bread that it had such a peculiar color, but did not discover the mistake until next morning. I think the axle grease lubricated the boys' tongues, for they seemed to talk more than usual that night.

Before leaving Brookville I rebranded my cattle "W" on the loin. There was no regular chute that I could run them through to brand them, but the Kansas-Pacific railroad officials kindly allowed me to use their stock yards, so I ran the cattle onto their scales to brand them.

I started out of Brookville in good shape, calculating to make drives of ten or twelve miles per day, so as to get my herd on the grazing grounds in good condition for the winter. I think it was on the third day's drive that I was stopped by some armed ranchers and told that I could not pass through their county on account of the Texas cattle fever. I was therefore obliged to leave the regular trail and go around quite a distance, making a difference of two or three days' longer drive. I was also having considerable trouble with my city cowboys, they having had no experience. They were willing enough, but just didn't know what to do. It made considerably more work for me as well as for my two experienced hands, who were most competent men.

There had been a number of herds over the trail, so whenever I could do so I would round up the cattle at night on the old bed-grounds. In such places they were more

quiet and not so restless as they would have been on a new bed-ground. About one o'clock in the morning they would want to get up and graze, and it required quite a little skill at such times to get them to lie down once more and remain quiet until daybreak. When my green hands were on herd during those hours, the cattle were pretty sure to get away—or nearly so. In fact, we all had to get up and help drive them back on the bed-grounds. Asa and Joe, the experienced cowpunchers, finally volunteered to take that watch and remain on herd until morning.

One night when they were on herd we came very near having a stampede, caused by a herd of buffalo. As they were coming on, the cattle jumped as one, jarring the ground terrifically—it was almost equal to a clap of thunder. We all jumped up, but Asa and Joe were “onto their job.” It was wonderful how quickly they stopped the stampede. I do not believe the herd moved more than two hundred yards.

When cattle begin to get restless at night, at first one or two will arise and try to leave the herd to graze. The riders therefore have to continue jogging around the herd continually, to drive the strays back. If they did not, the entire herd would be up and drifting in a very short time. Singing to the cattle has a great charm for them. It seems to act like a lullaby. It is beneficial to the herder as well as the cattle, because it keeps him from getting sleepy.

When we had reached a point within a few days' drive of Wallace, one of the green hands, while on herd, let some fifty or sixty head stray away. I did not discover it until we commenced to round up the herd for the night. It was a great piece of carelessness, although the country was quite unbroken. I have always thought he got off his horse and went to sleep. We succeeded in finding a few of them that night but I could not tell just how many were gone without making a count, and that would have required some time and made considerable extra work, so I decided to send the

main herd on and remain behind with one of the men, "Velocipede Charley," so-called because he was always talking about riding his velocipede and of his great doings on it in New York. Asa was responsible for the nickname.

Our plan was to scout the country and see if we could locate the lost cattle. I expected to overtake the herd within a few hours, so did not make preparations to remain away any length of time. We hunted the country pretty thoroughly without success, and then went over to a creek south of the Smoky—I think it was Walnut creek. However, we had no better success there, so we remained there that night. (That country was unsettled at the time.) We did not get back to our camp on the Smoky until dark. We were pretty hungry, not having eaten anything since morning and then only sparingly. I remembered reading of some young hunters who were lost on the great plains of Texas, and being without food, had gathered buffalo bones, placed them on a fire, and would then crack them and eat the marrow. We concluded to try it. Billy had left the remainder of a hind-quarter of buffalo in camp, but the meat on it had been about used up. There were some onions and potato peelings. We found a couple of tomato cans and decided to make a sort of stew. It was mostly water with a flavoring of onion and potato. However, with that and the marrow we managed to make out a fair sort of a supper—but how sick we were afterwards! I really think we must have had ptomaine poisoning.

The following day we found a few head of cattle on the Smoky. While we were on Walnut creek a herd had passed. It was not very far ahead of us, so we overtook it that night, and found that a few more of our strays had come into this herd. We remained with the good people in charge of that herd until we reached Wallace. This was done to save our horses, as they were pretty well fagged out. My cattle had arrived safely, and I at once rounded



them up and counted them. I found that I was short about a dozen. All of them may not have been lost at the same time, as cattle will be overlooked occasionally in heavy underbrush, where they go to get rid of mosquitoes and buffalo gnats. I made my mistake when I started out from Brookville without more efficient men. I should have had at least two more good cowboys; so in trying to save a few dollars I lost out by it. As a matter of fact, however, I do not blame the young man who allowed the cattle to escape, as I myself let the cattle get off the bed-ground one night. I used to take the first herd tour for the night, and on this occasion went to sleep in spite of all I could do. When I awakened the cattle were mostly up and leaving their bed-ground. I tried to drive them back, but could not do it, and rather than awaken the men I let them go. It required some little time the next morning to gather them up and get on the road. There was some excuse for my sleeping on herd, however, as there was scarcely a night that I did not get up several times to see if everything was all right. The least little noise would awaken me. Had I called my men that night we would soon have rounded them up again, but I took the chance as there was plenty of grass and water. In the other case there was not.

In a few days I commenced to re-brand my cattle, throwing each one and placing the initial "H" on the fore shoulder, "W" on the side and "W" on the hip, in block letters. My uncle purchased thirty bulls from various ranchers around Lawrence, Kansas. We got them very cheap, as the farmers wanted to change them for new ones. It is not best to let the same bulls run in a herd too long. They were a fine lot. Their first progeny (steers) were shipped to Kansas City at the age of three years, and were purchased for the foreign market. They were about the first lot of grass-fed cattle shipped overseas.



## CHAPTER XIX

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### DESCRIPTION OF A CATTLE ROUND-UP



GENERAL round-up takes place during the spring and autumn. This is the time when every man has to work. It is exciting, but—save for the lack of sleep—it is not exhausting, although to sit in the saddle from twelve to fifteen hours a day is certainly tiresome.

Each cowboy has his own "string" of eight or nine ponies—one to be used for the morning work, and one for the afternoon. Each animal, therefore, would get a three days' rest before being used again. A separate pony was also kept for night riding. The spring and early round-ups were especially to get the cattle back on the ranges, count them and brand the calves. There is much hard work and some risks in a round-up, and also much fun. The meeting place was appointed where all the cattlemen gathered to make their plans and appoint a foreman or captain of the round-up. His authority was law. Each outfit was notified what section of the country it should cover. Usually every stockman had his own wagon. Some of the smaller outfits combined, and in that way effected quite a saving. Each cattleman had his own range where he endeavored to retain his cattle by line-riders. There was an unwritten law that no cattleman would interfere with another's range. The cattle wandered off, to a great extent, but still, kept on their ranges, which might cover several square miles.

The grand round-ups usually commenced at the source of some valley or stream. All the different outfits gathered there with their grub wagons, each carrying food and bedding. Each wagon was drawn by two or four horses and was driven by the cook. The men were called about three

o'clock in the morning, by the cook crying, "Come and get it!" All hands turned out immediately. Dressing was a simple affair, after which each man rolled and corded his bedding. If he didn't, the cook would leave it behind and he would be without for the balance of the trip. When dressed, each man went to the fire, where he picked out a tin cup, tin plate, knife and fork, and helped himself to the coffee and what food there was, squatting or standing as best suited him. Dawn was probably breaking by this time, and the night wranglers were bringing in the pony herd.

The men ran ropes from the wagons at right angles to one another, and into this rope corral the horses were driven. Usually a skilled roper would catch the ponies, for, if a man was unskilled and roped the wrong horse, or roped it in the wrong place, there was a chance that the whole herd would stampee.

Every man saddled and bridled his own animal, and sometimes there was tall bucking, to the merriment of the crowd. It was bad taste to "go to leather"—that is, for a rider to grab the saddlehorn to steady himself under such conditions. As soon as the men were all saddled up, the whole outfit started on the long circuit.

Usually the foreman who had charge of a wagon was put in charge of several men by the round-up captain. He might keep his men together until they had gone twelve or fifteen miles from camp, and then direct them in couples to take in certain sections of country. They would gather all the cattle they could find, and gradually drive them to the meeting place. Accompanying each wagon were usually eight or ten riders, while the extra horses were driven by two of the men who were known as "wranglers." These had charge of the pony herd day and night. These men were fine horsemen, accustomed to riding half-broken animals at any speed over any sort of country, either by day or night. They wore flannel shirts with loose handkerchiefs

knotted around their necks, broad hats, and boots with jingling spurs. Leather "chaps" protected their legs in riding through brushy country or cactus patches.

A morning ride might last six or eight hours—sometimes longer. Each man had to take his turn at night-guarding. The captain of the round-up assigned the guards, or notified the foreman of a wagon to do it. Guards stood for two hours, the night-herders usually being on duty from eight o'clock in the evening until four in the morning, when the night-herders were relieved by the day-herders.

There was a great deal of rough play, and as the men all carried revolvers—for usually there was a "bad man" among them—there was now and then a shooting affair. A man who was a coward or who shirked his work, had a hard time. No man could afford to let himself be bullied or treated as a butt; on the other hand, if anyone was looking for a fight, he was certain to be accommodated.

The round-up having begun, the outfits proceeded down stream driving in the cattle from both sides of the valley until they reached a home station. All the cattle, consisting of several thousand, were rounded up many times. Then each owner cut out his own brand. There might be several cuttings-out by cattlemen who had adjoining ranches. These herds were held by several cowpunchers, while only a few of the herders who worked for the owners were allowed to do the cutting out. These were special men, well up in reading brands, and with keen eyes, for in the springtime the hair on the cattle is yet long, and it requires good eyesight to make out the different brands. However, these men become so skillful at the business that they know the cattle belonging to their outfits by their looks. If a cow has a calf that has become separated from its mother, she is allowed to remain in the herd until she has located her offspring. When the cattle are being gathered it quite often happens that cows will hide their calves in secluded places, leaving one of their number to guard them, while the mothers go for water.

One of the greatest losses of the cattleman was occasioned by wolves. Large rewards were offered for the scalps of wolves, coyotes or mountain lions. In large herds one occasionally saw animals minus their tails. This was done by the wolves in trying to pull down the animal, as when hungry these fierce brutes would resort to any method to kill a calf or young steer.

On the owner's range he was allowed to cut out the mavericks and unbranded yearlings. The outfits took turns in furnishing meat for the different organizations. The beef killed was usually the mavericks. The word "maverick" originated through a man by that name who was in Texas during the Civil War, where there were thousands of cattle without owners, and therefore unbranded. Samuel A. Maverick of San Antonio was one of the first men to go into the business of gathering these loose cattle and branding them. He was formerly from South Carolina, a runaway boy. He had joined an expedition of about twenty men which invaded Mexico at the town of Mier, prior to the Mexican War, and was captured there. The Mexicans killed many of them, choosing those to be shot by lot. Ten white beans and ten black ones would be placed in a sack. The unfortunate men who drew the black beans were immediately shot.

Samuel Maverick began locating land soon after the war, and became the largest land owner in Texas, if not in the United States. He owned more cattle on the free public range than any other man in the Lone Star state. In 1861 nearly all the men went into the war. Maverick's cattle ran wild on the range, and when the war closed there had been tens of thousands of cattle bred in the four years. Maverick was the greatest claimant of these wild cattle, and marked them with his brand wherever caught. Other owners, and even men who had never owned cattle, would brand with their own marks such cattle as they caught un-







—From a Painting by C. M. Russell.

An Indian Village Changing Camping Places.

branded. It thus became the custom, among cattlemen using a free range, to stamp as their own any unbranded cattle they found during the round-up. To this day these stray cattle are known as "mavericks."

The men occupied in cutting out the cattle worked each animal carefully to the edge of the herd, and there, with a sudden dash, drove it out at a run. Many times an animal was anxious to break back and rejoin the herd.

The writer, while in the Indian Territory at a round-up, saw a peculiar feat. A steer had been acting badly, seemingly bound to return to the herd after having been cut out. Cattle dislike being alone, and it is no easy matter to hold the first four or five that are cut out. After a few are together they are contented. This particular steer, while trying to rejoin the herd, was roped by a skilled puncher. His lariat caught the animal around the horns. The cowboy's horse stopped suddenly, the rope tightened and over the steer went, turning a complete somersault. At first it was thought the animal's neck had been broken. The puncher slackened his rope, whereupon the steer arose, shook its head and quietly went back to the "cut." That particular animal gave no further trouble.

When the owner of a ranch had cut out all his cattle, he began to brand, or possibly he waited until the round-up was entirely over. The branding was the hardest part of the work, for the branding irons have to be kept on the fire until they are red hot. The calves were roped, thrown and the hot irons placed on them until the hair was burned through. It was necessary for the brander to be very careful not to burn too deeply, or a running sore might develop. The largest cattle were usually driven through a chute, and as they passed through, the iron would be placed against them. This is an easier method than to throw the animal; the latter method is hard on the horse as well as the man. If thrown, however, the branding was usually a better job.

To throw an animal, one of the men roped it around the horns, another man by the hind legs—this latter being known as “heeling.” The ropers then pulled in opposite directions, which straightened out the animal. Another man seized it by the tail and pulled it over on its side, when the brand was applied.

Some very laughable things occur during this work. The writer was responsible for one, which was extremely funny for the audience, but not for the victim. I was obliged to rebrand some of my cattle. I went down to the butcher corral while my men were at work—at least, supposed to be—but when I arrived they were all sitting on the fence. I told them I was not paying them to hold down the fence boards. They told me a mad cow had driven them out of the corral. I laughed and said, “Let me have a rope, and I’ll show you how to do it; there is no danger.” There were two or more snubbing-posts in the corral, and the cow was frothing at the mouth, pawing and acting in a fighting mood. My idea was to rope the cow, and if she came for me I would jump behind one of the posts or climb the fence. It was a high board fence, and rather hard to get over. Taking the rope, I entered the corral, made a cast, and by good luck roped her around the horns the first throw. Before I could pass the rope around the snubbing post, however, she came for me full speed, “head down and tail a-rising!” There was a hog pen in one corner of the corral and I made for that. I didn’t pause to put my hands on the fence, but took a header over the top board, landing in a mess of filth. When I staggered to my feet I was a sight! Luckily no bones were broken. The men were laughing fit to kill. They afterward told me that while I was in the air, the cow struck the fence full tilt. The laugh was on me, and I had to go to the house and change my clothes. I sent the men a keg of beer and didn’t go to the corral again that day.

In driving cattle into a corral, there were often some that managed to escape from day to day, remaining out to the very last and being very hard to run in. I had one of the most knowing cow ponies I ever saw, which I rode for years. One season we had about cleaned up our work, making our last drive into the yard, and one of the steers had broken away several times. I was bound to drive it in, as I wanted to rebrand it. I took after the steer as fast as I could ride, and had him near the entrance of the corral, when he turned quickly. "Monk," my pony, turned fully as quickly. The cinch broke and off I went, saddle and all rolling against the fence. "Monk" never stopped, but just kept after the steer, turned him and ran him into the corral, stopping at the entrance and looking around as much as to say, "I didn't need your assistance."

Another time we were letting a bull out of the chute after branding him. I had purchased several bulls from a passing herd on its way to Colorado, and was branding the bunch. Fred Slagle, the post blacksmith, was assisting me. His business was to let the bull out of the chute. As one animal left the pen, he took after Fred. The latter, not having time to jump the fence, was in a serious predicament. The bull was right at his heels, when Fred's dog grabbed the animal by the nose, which saved the Dutchman. I never could get Slagle to help me again.

## CHAPTER XX

### A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF "WILD BILL" HICKOK



FIRST met "Wild Bill" (James Butler Hickok) at Fort Wallace, Kansas, in the fall of 1869. He came to Wallace as one of the scouts with the Fifth Cavalry. William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) was the chief scout at that time. The regiment was at Wallace a few days and then went to Fort Lyon, Colorado, where it remained during the winter, and while there went on several scouts, the most important of which was the rescue of General Penrose's command.

When the Fifth Cavalry was relieved from the Department of the Missouri, all the scouts were discharged with the exception of Cody, who went to old Fort McPherson, Nebraska, with the regiment. Hickok, on his discharge from the service, returned to Fort Hays, Kansas (via Fort Wallace), where he had been employed as scout, and shortly after was appointed marshal of that city. In 1872 I met him again in Abilene, Kansas, the great cattle mart of the West. He was city marshal there. I was in Abilene buying cattle. One of my cowboys tried to run the town in good old Western style, shooting off his gun, and declaring that "he was a wolf and it was his night to howl." Hickok arrested him and placed him in the lock-up. The cowboy had my revolver, which was returned to me. When I left Abilene this cowboy was serving his sentence.

During the time that I knew Hickok he did not indulge in liquor. He was not a profane man, and was affable to meet. He had the respect of the citizens, and especially the cowmen. While he may have had a habit of shooting up the saloons in his younger days, he certainly put a stop to that sort of sport in Hays City and Abilene. Upon my



leaving Abilene with my cattle—which by the way was the first herd that went into Western Kansas—I lost touch with Hickok. I heard he had gone to Deadwood, South Dakota, at the first outbreak of the Black Hills gold excitement. There he was cowardly assassinated by a cheap gambler named Jack McCall, while sitting in at a game of cards. It appeared that Hickok and McCall had, on the previous day, been playing cards, and that Bill had won all his money. McCall acknowledged that he had been beaten fairly, but nevertheless, Bill, because of his well-known generosity, insisted upon returning to McCall \$10 of the money.

The following day, August 2, 1876, Wild Bill was engaged in another game of cards with three men in the saloon of Nuttall & Mann. Upon this occasion he was sitting with his back to the door—something he was never known to do before. Unseen by Bill, McCall entered, and came around behind Hickok, where he jerked out his gun, placed it close to Wild Bill's head and fired, killing him instantly. It was a treacherous, cowardly act. Great excitement prevailed in Deadwood and a lynching was freely discussed, but not carried out. McCall surrendered. It has always been contended that self-aggrandizement was his reason for murdering Wild Bill.

At McCall's first trial, he was acquitted, alleging that he had killed Wild Bill for the reason that the latter had shot his (McCall's) brother. Following his acquittal, McCall went to Custer City, where he began boasting of his murderous deed. He was immediately re-arrested and sent to Yankton for trial, where a verdict of guilty was rendered almost without deliberation by the jury. McCall was hanged on the first of March, 1877, the execution being the first legal hanging in Dakota Territory.

It subsequently developed that McCall was the scapegrace son of respectable parents in Louisville, Ky. Correspondence with the McCall family by the Yankton authori-

ties, developed the information that Wild Bill had not shot McCall's brother, nor ever had any trouble with him. Some historians have brought out the information that McCall did not even have a brother.

Mrs. Hickok was very instrumental in prosecuting McCall for the murder of her husband. She was a most estimable woman, and had been the wife of a circus man named Blake, having herself been a noted bare-back rider at one time. The last I heard of her she was the owner of a very fine stock ranch near Salina, Kans. This account of the killing was told me shortly after the tragedy by a reliable business man who lived in Deadwood at the time. I was in Wyoming and read the account of the murder in the Cheyenne and Deadwood papers, which declared it was a dastardly murder, and even the bad element condemned it. Buffalo Bill and Wild Bill were great friends, although the latter was nearly ten years Cody's senior, and they rode the Pony Express together. Cody speaks of Hickok in the highest terms of praise, in his memoirs.

Had Hickok been the coward that some of his critics try to make out, he would not have been a friend of Cody, nor would he have been able to fill the honorable position of city marshal of Hays City and Abilene. He did kill several men, but those who malign him cannot prove that it was not done in self-defense or in the execution of his duties as marshal. If, in his younger days, he was inclined to be rather wild, he atoned for it in later years. At his death, Hickok was about 37 years of age.

Many untrue stories have been circulated in eastern magazines regarding Wild Bill, such as declaring that at one time at St. Joe, Mo., a man had pulled his nose and dared him to shoot, and had called him a coward, and that Wild Bill had slunk away. It was further said that he had never been a scout. All such stories are false, as old timers who knew Hickok personally have reason to know.

Wild Bill had done splendid work as a scout in the western sections during the Civil War. I think he did his first killing in Montana while an Express rider. His greatest feat, however, was his terrific fight with the McCandless gang at Rock Creek Station, Nebraska, while riding the pony express, which will always form an interesting chapter in the thrilling history of the West.

\*"Coming into his swing station at Rock Creek one day in December, 1870, Bill failed to arouse anyone with his shouts for a fresh mount, which was an indication of trouble. It was the stock-tender's business to be on hand with the relief pony the instant the rider came in. The Pony Express did not tolerate delays. Galloping into the yard, Bill dismounted and hurried to the stable, where he found, in the doorway, the stock tender lying dead. At the same instant a woman's voice rang out from the cabin near by. Turning about, Bill found himself face to face with a ruffian who was rushing from the house, brandishing a six-shooter. Bill asked no questions, but pulled one of the two guns he carried and fired. No sooner had the man fallen, however, than a second man, also armed, came out of the cabin. Hickok disposed of this fellow also, and then entered the place, where he was met with a regular fusillade from four others. Although the room was thick with smoke, and Bill had to use extreme care to avoid hitting the woman, who was screaming in the corner, he managed to kill two of his assailants who were armed with revolvers, and to ward off the blow which a third had leveled at him with a rifle. The blow knocked his own weapon from his hand, but his knife was still left him, and with it he put the man with the rifle out of the way. His troubles were not at an end, however, as another man appeared at the window and started to climb in and avenge his fellow gangsters. Bill reached for a rifle which lay on the floor and shot first. When he had taken count a few minutes later, he discovered that he had killed five men and wounded the sixth, who escaped in the fight.

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\*Col. W. F. Cody in *Hearst's Magazine*, Jan., 1917.

"The woman, who had been rendered unconscious by one of the desperadoes, soon revived. She was the stock tender's wife, and had been attacked by the gang as soon as they had slain her husband. The passengers of the Overland stage, which rolled in as Bill was reviving the terrified woman, were given a view of western life which none of them ever forgot. Bill was the hero of the occasion, and a real hero he was, for probably never has a man won such a victory against such overwhelming odds in all the history of the war against the ruffians of the West. The man in that day who was not quick on the trigger, had little chance with the outlaws among whom he lived."

Hickok never was known as a "bad man" by those who knew him, although he had several notches on his gun—reminders of men he had killed, all in the line of his duty. He was a man over six feet in stature, of magnificent physique, and had the keenest steel-blue eyes I ever saw. He never indulged in liquor, was quiet in manner, a man of nerve and steel, and had the instincts of a gentleman.

I will add here, that there were frontiersmen and dare-devil fighting men on the Plains who were a race of men bred by the prairies and hard conditions of Western life. They became man-killers from stern necessity.

One of the Overland stage superintendents was Alf Slade—a man of nerve and courage—who, having earned the reputation of being a gun fighter, became too eager to live up to it, eventually becoming an outlaw. He was easily the best superintendent of the line, but his habit of man-killing got him into trouble, which resulted in his own execution on the gallows.

I was riding one day with Ed Lane, of whom I have heretofore spoken. I asked him how quickly he could shoot. He answered, "As quick as this," pulling his gun from its scabbard and firing six shots almost instantly, to my great surprise. He commenced to shoot while answering my question.



## CHAPTER XXI

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### EPISODES OF COL. WILLIAM F. CODY



HIS incident about my old friend, Buffalo Bill, I think, has not been published in this form. It was told me by my former general, E. A. Carr.

In October, 1868, the Fifth Cavalry left Wallace for Fort Lyon, Colorado. Previous to their arrival, Colonel Penrose, Captain Third Infantry, left with a command of about 250 men to scout the Cimarron country as far as the Canadian river. The command had not been heard from for several weeks, and the military authorities were getting anxious about the safety of the command, so General Carr was ordered out with his command to try and locate them.

On one of the tributaries of the Cimarron they found one of Penrose's old camps. They followed this stream to the Cimarron river and found other camps. They also found the trail leaving the stream and going south toward the Canadian river. After two or three days' marching they found Penrose's command encamped on a branch of the Canadian, half-famished. They had been living on short rations, and many of their mules had died from fatigue and starvation. They were lost.

Penrose had sent couriers and a Seventh Cavalry company to Fort Lyon for rations, but had not heard from them. As soon as the general had taken care of Penrose's command, he wanted to send dispatches to Gen. Sheridan, who was at Camp Supply, notifying him that he had found the missing command. He therefore sent for his scouts to come to his tent. At this time, Cody was ill with chills and fever, and was lying in a tent near the general's. The scouts demurred taking the dispatches out, saying it was extremely



dangerous; that they knew nothing about the country, etc. Cody overheard the conversation, arose from his sick bed, went to the general's tent and said, "General, if no one is willing to take those dispatches, I will carry them myself."

The general told him he had not thought of sending him, as he was a sick man; that the extremely cold weather would be hard on him, and therefore he did not want to send him. However, Cody insisted upon going, and as the general was very anxious to send the dispatches, he decided to let Cody go. The ride was through an unknown country.

When asked how many men he wanted to take with him, Cody replied that he would prefer to go alone, and that all he wanted was a lead horse; that if necessary he would lay over during the day and travel by night, and if there were several in the party they would be more likely to be seen. Cody carried the dispatches to Camp Supply, more than 300 miles distant, and while he did not encounter any Indians, he saw many evidences of their recent occupancy of the country.

I will relate another little episode which pleased me very much. While I was stationed at Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., in 1909, Cody, with his Wild West Show was exhibiting at Chattanooga, Tenn. He had been there three or four days, and on the last day of his stay, several of the officers and I decided to go and witness the performance. Upon arrival, I took several of the young officers to call on Cody. He asked me why I had not been down before, and I told him that I had just finished the officers' test ride of thirty miles a day for three days, ninety miles in all, making each ride in about five hours. Cody laughed and said: "Wheeler, when I first knew you, you used to ride that far in a day." I had never told any of these young officers of my earlier experiences on the Plains.

In 1872 I spent the holidays in St. Louis. At that time Cody and "Texas Jack" Omohondro were playing in Ned

Buntline's (Col. Judson) drama entitled, "The Scouts of the Plains." Linggard's company of New York was also there; also "The English Blondes." All were stopping at the Southern Hotel.

One evening after the play, we went out for some refreshments. An actor named Hudson of Linggard's company, accompanied the party. Of course we went into one of the fashionable resorts. Cody had a way of knotting his hair under his hat so that people would not recognize him. Hudson was wearing Texas Jack's sombrero, and passing himself off as Texas Jack.

An elderly gentleman who had been imbibing rather freely joined our party. He addressed most of his conversation to Hudson, under the impression that he was talking to Texas Jack. He told him that he admired him very much, but that he did not have much use for Buffalo Bill. This, of course, caused us much amusement. Presently he took from his finger a very nice old-fashioned seal ring and gave it to Hudson as a token of friendship.

A day or so later, one of the hotel employes asked me if I was connected with "The Scouts of the Plains" company. I told him no, that Cody and I were old friends on the Plains, and while in the city I was passing quite a little time with him. The clerk then stated that there was a prominent man and his family living at the hotel—a man who, at times, drank too much; that he had been out a few nights before, and while in his cups had given away a valuable ring; that he had had it for a number of years, and was very anxious to get it back. The gentleman had an indistinct idea that he had given the ring to one of the members of the "Scouts of the Plains" company.

I told the clerk that I knew all about the transaction, and would be pleased to assist in recovering the ring. I went to Cody about it, and he said that of course the ring must be returned, and that he would see Hudson and get it. He

went to Hudson and told him the ring must be given up. Hudson replied that he had given it to his sister in the presence of the ladies of the other troupes, and that under the circumstances he disliked to ask her for it. This young lady was called "Laughing Eyes" by Cody and Texas Jack. She was indeed a very attractive person. In the meantime I had been introduced to the gentleman who had given the ring to Hudson. He told me he was willing to get the young lady another ring. I replied that I did not think Cody would stand for that, although neither he nor Texas Jack had anything to do with the transaction.

To shorten the story: We got the ring back, and the man gave me an order on Jackard's jewelry store for a ring to cost not to exceed \$100. I bought a very pretty ring for less than one-half the amount.


One evening after the play and refreshments, "Laughing Eyes" was presented with the ring before quite a number of the show people. In the next morning's "Globe-Democrat" was published an article to the effect that Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack had presented the young lady with a very valuable diamond ring. Mr.—— appreciated my services, and before I left the city he gave me and some of my friends a very nice dinner.

Col. Wm. F. Cody was buried on Mt. Lookout, near Denver, on June 3, 1917, when thousands paid homage to the famous scout. The burial services were conducted by the Masons. "Taps" was blown over the grave, and a salute of eleven guns sounded the knell in the life of a hero and maker of history. The salute, which was that of a brigadier general, was given in recognition of that title which had been conferred upon Colonel Cody by the governor of Nebraska. A monument is to be placed over his grave by the people who knew him so well.

He rests a-top Mt. Lookout where below can be seen the stretches of the Plains of Kansas and Nebraska, the hills of Colorado and the hummocks of Wyoming, his old roving places of other days.

## CHAPTER XXII

### LOST ON THE PRAIRIE

HE commanding officer of Fort Wallace, Kansas, Major Morris, Third Infantry, had some eastern friends visiting him who had never seen a real live buffalo, and the major wanted to give them an opportunity, and asked me to go out with the party. I was familiar with the country, and could find the game, if there were any buffalo in the vicinity.

We started out one beautiful December morning in 1872, the members of the party riding in an ambulance, and I riding my celebrated pony "Nibs." The plan was that if we found any buffalo, I was to try and kill one from horseback, so they could witness a mounted buffalo hunt. We were out some hours without success, but saw quite a number of antelope and jackrabbits. I secured a couple of the latter.

When the party returned to the post, I went to my cattle ranch near by to see how my men and herd were doing. Riding up, I did not see many of the cattle, and found the ranch deserted. From appearances I knew the men must have been away for a day or two, so came to the conclusion that they must be out hunting cattle which had strayed away. I had had nothing to eat since morning, and made coffee and fried some bacon.

While engaged in preparing my meal, my men came up with a bunch of cattle. They had been out three days gathering them, but thought they had not found all of them. They informed me that a severe storm had come up—a strong wind blowing from the north—and that some of the cattle had drifted with it. Cattle will usually do this if the weather is cold, in order to keep warm. After a storm, they

will work their way back to their own range, providing they have been on it for some time. It is a home to them. But mine were in a country strange to them, and many herds of buffalo were passing back and forth. Being new in the business, this information made me anxious about them. So I told the men I would go in to the post, get another horse and some warm clothing, return that night or early in the morning, and we would then round up the cattle and see how many were missing. However, I concluded to scout the country a bit before going in to the post, hoping to find some of them. While I was absorbed in this pursuit, before I realized it night came on, catching me about fifteen miles from the post.

Eagle Tail, a small railroad station, was not very far away, so I decided to ride in there and get some food for myself and feed for my horse before going in to the post—about ten miles—but my friends prevailed upon me to remain over night at Eagle Tail. I was so exercised over the loss of my cattle that I accepted the invitation, instead of returning to the post.

Early the next morning I started out, continuing my hunt for the cattle. During the day I saw quite a number of small herds of buffalo, and had considerable trouble in distinguishing whether they were buffalo or cattle, so had to investigate a number of herds which caused me considerable extra riding. If I had carried a pair of field glasses, all this could have been avoided. All cattlemen should carry them; it would save them lots of horseflesh.

I had been out most of the day when I discovered, quite a distance away, some objects which did not act like buffalo, so I had to go and see what they were, and found them to be quite a band of wild horses. Thus I was again disappointed in my search.

It was now time for me to think of returning either to the ranch or the post, the former being nearer. I supposed



I was between the railroad and the old Fort Lyon wagon road, and that all I had to do was to ride eastward, and in time I would strike either of the places, but I expected to be out most of the night. I commenced to bear toward the wagon road, thinking to come to it very soon. Failing to do this, it dawned upon me that I might have crossed the road. That seemed impossible, however, for my horse certainly would have noticed it. I also suspected that I might have crossed the road when after the wild horses.

It was getting late, and my pony was more or less weary. But I was sleepy and tired myself, and decided to go into camp for awhile. I unsaddled, but not having a lariat, I lengthened my bridle rein by detaching one end from the bit. This I fastened to my wrist, rolled up in my saddle blanket and went to sleep.

I was awakened several times in the night by the pony pulling on the rein to get more grazing ground. Toward morning, being rather cold, I saddled up and moved on. There being no moon or stars, I could not use the faithful old North Star as a guide, but contented myself by riding in the general direction I thought the ranch should be.

When daylight appeared the country seemed unfamiliar, and I began to get a bit alarmed. It was quite cloudy, the sun appearing only at intervals, and I made very little headway. Soon I concluded I was lost. Several times I gave my horse his head and he would start in a new direction. I let him go along for awhile, then, concluding he was headed wrong, would start him in another direction. I afterward learned the horse was right, and if he had had his own way I would have reached home that day. At the time I did not know a horse's intelligence.

I rode all that day, grazing my horse several times, and when night came I camped as on the previous night, but changed my tactics somewhat. It grew very cold in the night, so I crawled up between "Nibs'" legs, as he lay

stretched out full length on the ground, and in that way received considerable warmth from his body. Moreover, my horse seemed to enjoy it about as much as myself. Once while I was sweetly sleeping I was rudely awakened by "Nibs" trying to roll over—to get a new position, I presume, or he may have thought it time to get up and move on, which I presently did.

I was not particularly hungry at any time, but worried some, wondering what I should do if a storm came up. Of course if there had been any fuel I could have started a fire in some gulch where the wind could not strike me, and probably could have weathered quite a severe storm. However, I was keeping up my courage pretty well and was not feeling very greatly fatigued; in fact, I felt pretty strong and was thinking very little about food. I knew if I got very hungry I could kill a jackrabbit.

Finally I came to a snow belt—there was quite a little snow on the ground—and there I found a wagon track and the carcass of an old buffalo bull that had been recently killed. Here was my chance to have a feast. The saddle (hind quarter) and tongue of the buffalo had been removed. I experienced considerable difficulty in carving the animal, having only my pocket knife, and the hide being very tough, but finally I succeeded in getting a few pounds, and having no salt, nor any matches with which to start a fire, I took my steak straight. I might have made a fire by means of my cartridges, but having only a few (I had expended quite a number while out with Major Morris' party) I did not know what use I might have for the few in my belt, feeling that I might need them worse if it grew much colder. Moreover, I realized that I might at any time run across hostile Indians, and in that case would doubtless need my ammunition for business.

Not having salt, the meat nauseated me, so I could not eat much of it, and what little I did eat, I could not chew,

but was obliged to cut it into small pellets—homeopathic doses. I then strapped a quantity of it to my saddle and went on my way, feeling much better.

I was quite sure that this track which I had discovered had been made by one of my own wagons, for only a few days before I had sent a wagon to the Arkansas river with provisions for a cattle man whose herd was wintering there, they being on the way from Texas to Idaho. The owner of this herd, while on his way to the railroad for these provisions, was overtaken by a severe snowstorm which lasted several days. He was all right as long as he stayed with his wagon, but as soon as the storm had subsided he had started for the railroad station on foot—his horses having broken away from the wagon—and before reaching the railroad another storm overtook him. He managed to weather this and reach the track but was badly frozen. He then hailed two trains, but they passed, not seeing his signals. Being determined that the next train should see him he crawled on the track, feeling that he would rather stand the chances of being run over than to freeze to death. Luckily, the engineer of the next train (a freight) saw him lying on the track and brought his engine to a standstill when it was almost upon the man. He was brought to the post hospital at Wallace, and was found to be so badly frozen that his legs were amputated above the knees.

As I rode along, this experience was not pleasant to think about, as a storm was liable to come up at any time at that season of the year. Following the back track for some distance, I soon came out of the snow belt, and at this point lost the wagon road, but a little distance further along I found it again, and followed it until I came to yet another track leading into it. This threw me into a quandary, and I was quite at a loss to know which to follow. However, I thought of a story which my Uncle Olmstead had told me years before—that when he was on his way from Ver-

mont west, he came to two roads diverging, and not knowing which to take, solved the problem by standing up his cane and letting it fall. He then pursued his journey in the direction indicated by the falling cane, which led him to Galena, Iowa.

I adopted this method, using my Winchester in lieu of a cane, and started on in the direction my gun had indicated. Ere long I came to the terminus of the road, where there had been an old wood-choppers' camp, and I remembered that this was the place where Mr. Jones' choppers had been killed by the Indians two or three years previously. It was evident that I had gone wrong again, but I did not mind a little thing like that. At least I knew where I was—some 35 miles from the post.

It was nice and warm here, so I tied my horse to a block of wood which he could drag about while grazing and proceeded to take a nap. I must have slept three or four hours, for on awakening, I discovered it was nearly sundown. Having had a good rest, we moved out once more, and being very greatly refreshed, was able to make good time, and I expected to get to the post early the following morning. I traveled well into the night, when, feeling that my horse was probably getting tired, I thought I would give him a rest. Turning off the road a piece to a ravine, I unsaddled and went to sleep. It grew very cold, and this must have awakened me. I was chilled clear through, and could scarcely get upon my feet. Frankly, I was somewhat distressed about my condition.

It then occurred to me that if I rolled down the bank into the ravine below, it would set my blood to circulating and warm me up. I did not know how much of a roll it was, and furthermore, didn't care. So I crawled to the edge of the bank and over I went! I never stopped until I reached the bottom of the ravine. I was somewhat dazed and bruised, my clothing was tattered and torn. but I was

"still in the ring" and never warmer in my life. If I had had "Nibs" as a bunkie it would not have been necessary for me to have made the perilous descent.

It was not yet daylight, but I thought I had better proceed on my journey. I crossed the trail, which was rather dim, without knowing it, but I very soon discovered my error, and turning to the right went back and very soon found the road. I proceeded a mile or more, when upon passing through a gulch where the snow had drifted in, I discovered some tracks, and wondering whose they were, dismounted to investigate, and found they were my own, which had been made while leading my horse through the snow a few hours before! So here I was, again going back on my own trail. Had I not discovered my tracks in the snow I might have been going yet. It seems that after I had found the road, I turned again to the right, when I should have gone to the left. This was not strange, in view of the condition I was in.

I soon reached Henshaw's ranch on the Smoky Hill river, some ten miles from the post, where I had had my summer camp and my cattle before taking them to the ranch. Here I saw a small herd of buffalo, with a two-year-old heifer from my herd among them, and I reasoned thus, "Here I have been out hunting cattle for five days, and this is the only animal I have seen. I will certainly accomplish a little something by taking this animal to the post." As I approached the herd, off they went like the wind, the heifer following, but not being able to keep up. I soon came alongside of her and tried to turn her, but she insisted on following the buffaloes. In a desperate effort to get by, she unsuccessfully tried to hook my horse, but only struck my stirrup leathers. Finding that I could not turn her, I decided to try and crease her, so banged away, and over she went, as dead as a door-nail. I had shot her about an inch too low. Upon examining the brand I found that it was my own, "H. W.



W." Had I not tried to crease her, she probably would have joined the buffalo herd and that would have been the last of her.

Upon my arrival at the post, I sent the butcher out after the carcass, but he could not find it. I then went direct to the cook house to get some refreshments, and found my cook just preparing the mid-day meal. She told me she was going to have bean soup, but that it was not quite ready. Knowing that I was very fond of it, she asked me if I would wait. I remarked that although I had had nothing to eat for several days an hour or so would make no difference, although I must admit that the time seemed a little long. Owing, no doubt to the condition of my stomach, I did not eat very much, which was probably the best thing for me. As a result of the trip I found that I had lost a few pounds in weight but after a good rest I felt all right.

When I walked into the store it created quite a little excitement, as my employes thought I had been hurt or was lost. They supposed I was at the ranch until that morning, when one of the men came in, informing them that I had left the post four days before. The commanding officer had made preparations to send men out to scour the country for me, but had very little hopes of finding me in that vast wilderness.

This experience was a good object lesson for me although rather a severe one. I at once provided myself with a compass, matchsafe, salt bag and pair of field glasses, and from that time I rarely went out without them. The compass came in handy on several occasions. My horse had stood the trip as well as I. I had purchased him from a man in the employ of Professor Marsh, of Yale College, who at the time was in that part of Kansas gathering fossils. "Nibs" was captured from a herd of wild horses, the professor assisting in the capture.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### HORSE AND CATTLE RUSTLERS

**H**ORSE and cattle stealing by the "rustlers" (thieves) was frequent. I lost a dozen horses which were stolen within two years, and never recovered any of them. They were worth at least \$125 each, and could not have been replaced for that sum. Six were stolen in one night during the autumn of 1873. The foreman told me of the loss the following morning. He had found their trail leading north, and thought two or three men had run them off as there were tracks of two or three extra horses, making nine animals. My men were feeling about as badly as myself over the loss of the horses, as they were all good mounts, and a cowboy's main delight is to ride good horses. Each herder had three good animals which he could call his own and no one else was supposed to throw a leg over them without his permission. I held each man responsible for the care of his horses, and great care had to be taken of their backs. I never would keep a herder long in my employ who did not look out for his horses. A cattle outfit that had good horses usually had good men.

With two of my men, Asa and Joe, heavily armed, I started out at once, prepared to follow the rustlers several days if necessary. At times we had trouble following the trail, as they tried to throw pursuers off the track by dividing the band of horses and then meeting again at pre-arranged places. On the second day we saw a horse grazing near the ravine we were in. It was about a half mile from us, and it now looked as if we were getting close to the thieves. If so, they must be in the gulch below. We therefore rode as far as we could up the ravine, taking great

care not to be seen. Here we dismounted, lariatd our horses and proceeded up the gulch on foot. Presently we came to an abrupt bend, and my foreman went ahead to explore the premises for we suspected that the thieves must be around the bend of the ravine, and if so, we were going to fire on them without warning, as we did not propose to take any chances. We knew they were desperate men, and would not give up without fighting.

The precautions observed in approaching the supposed rustlers were without avail, however, for there was nobody in the ravine. We were at once very much disappointed and very much relieved. The animal which we had seen evidently belonged to the rustlers, and they had no doubt abandoned him. He was not a very good horse. We were now sure there were only two men with the horses, so this gave us the advantage over them. The horse was picked up shortly afterward, but the owner never was located. It had been my intention to secure the animal upon my return.

We followed the trail for four days, when a snow storm came up and the pursuit had to be abandoned. It may have been a good thing for us, as we were getting near the rendezvous of the notorious "Doc" Middleton's band of rustlers, who were then the most prominent horse and cattle thieves in all the West, with agencies in several states, where they disposed of their stolen stock. The state of Nebraska, in which they were located, finally, at great expense, broke up the gang. Middleton served a term in the Nebraska penitentiary, and later was arrested in Wyoming for selling whiskey without a license. He was sent to jail in Douglas, Wyoming, and died there.

## CHAPTER XXIV

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### WHO OWNED THIS OUTFIT?



ON one of my trips hunting cattle, I found an abandoned wagon, two sets of Concord harness, a sack and a half of flour, some yeast powders and other provisions, a camp cooking outfit, steel traps, a reloading outfit and several blankets that evidently had been blown out of the wagon and were partially covered with snow; a home-made shirt with some initials worked on it, and one of Dickens' novels. On the fly-leaf of the book was a post office address, but no name. The address was that of a small town in Colorado.

Near the outfit were a few new railroad ties from which chips had been cut, with an axe alongside. It looked very much as if the party or parties had lost their horses and had taken the bridles and gone to look for them. A stray storm may have come up, and possibly they were unable to find their way back. Indians could not have been connected with the incident, or they certainly would have taken the provisions and blankets. I had two or three cowboys with me, and we examined the surrounding country thoroughly, but could find no trace of the owners, so we took the property to my ranch.

I made every effort to locate the owners by writing to the postmaster of the Colorado town, and by advertising in a Kansas City paper, but never received any response.

On another trip we discovered the skeleton of an Indian lying on a sort of shelf on a chalky bluff. It had evidently been there a great many years, and judging from the size of the bones, the savage must have been a giant.

## CHAPTER XXV

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### CAPTURE OF A HORSE THIEF



ANOTHER incident relating to horse stealing occurred during the winter of 1872-73. Lieut. Quentin Campbell, Fifth Infantry, the post quartermaster, loaned a horse to F. C. Gay, our station agent, and while the animal was in Gay's possession it was stolen. The whole community sympathized with them, especially the lieutenant, who had no right to lend a citizen a government animal.

It was the consensus of opinion that measures must be taken to stop horse stealing, and as the county was not organized, the people had to take the matter into their own hands. It was determined that if the thief were caught, he should suffer the death penalty as an object lesson to all evil-doers.

I presume I must have talked more than I should about the theft, and this later placed me in a rather embarrassing position. A few nights after the theft of the horse, I was awakened by a knock at my bedroom window. I heard several voices and inquired who was there. The answer came, "It is Gay; I want to see you on business." I arose and let him in, inquiring what was up. He said the horse had been recaptured near Lake Station, and that the thief was outside with the balance of the posse.

I thereupon let the men all enter. They were mostly railroad men, and among them was a soldier named Riley, who was a member of the party of troops that guarded Lake Station. He had been sent down as a guard over the prisoner.

To my great surprise and decided embarrassment, I recognized the culprit as a man whom I had one time em-



ployed on my ranch. I always had considered him honest, so said, "What are you doing here? This looks quite serious. Your circumstances are not such that you were obliged to resort to horse stealing."

"Well," replied the prisoner, "they have caught me with the goods. I would not have taken the horse if Mr. Gay had treated me on the square. I did it to get even with him. I now see my mistake. I saw it after I had taken the horse, but I did not have the courage to bring the animal back. This is my first offense, and I'm sorry I did it, but I suppose it is too late to make amends for it now."

I called Mr. Gay, his assistant and the telegraph operator into the next room.

"What do you propose to do with him—turn him over to the military authorities?" I queried.

"No," was the reply. "We didn't bring him here for that purpose. Our intentions were to hang him."

"Then why didn't you do it at the station, where you had a convenient telegraph pole?" I suggested.

"We wanted your assistance," was the answer. "You are more interested in this business than anybody else, and are one of the prominent men here."

It was an awkward situation. However, I told the posse that I was now looking at the matter in a different light.

"I know this man," said I. "I don't think he is a bad fellow at heart. He probably thought he had a grievance and let it prey on his mind until he committed the act. He now sees his mistake. I am in favor of turning him over to the military authorities for punishment and letting the law take its course."

I called two or three more men into the council and found that their opinions differed widely. One man intimated that I "had no sand."

In the meantime I was called aside by one of my men who had been in the stock business in New Mexico. He had made two or three starts, and each time had been ruined

by losing his stock through cattle rustlers and Indians. He was loading his revolver.

"Homer," said he, "don't have anything to do with this affair. Riley and I will take him out. No doubt he will try to escape, and it will be our business to prevent it—see?"

After further council, the matter was put to a vote by secret ballot, whether the thief should be strung up at once or turned over to the military authorities. With one or two exceptions, the men voted to let the military authorities settle the matter. This was accordingly done, and the man was placed in the guard-house.

The thief's grievance against Mr. Gay was all imagination. His grievance should have been against me, if anyone. The man had turned his own horses into a pen where Gay had some hay stacked. The animals had trampled it down, destroying much of it, and I determined the sum which the man should pay.

The next morning the thief was allowed to come to my store under guard and deposit some money. He said he was afraid the other prisoners in the guard-house would take it away from him. He also told me that when he found the posse intended bringing him over to me "it was all up for him," as he knew I had no use for horse thieves. However, he had overheard enough of our conversation to know that I was not in favor of hanging him, and then the world began to look brighter.

He was tried in the United States court at Topeka, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. He had been in confinement about a year when the chaplain of the prison took great interest in his welfare, and sent Mr. Gay a petition blank, asking him to circulate it for signatures to have the man pardoned.

The petition was circulated and the man was freed. He returned to Wallace and Mr. Gay gave him a job on the section. In a few months he was made a section-boss and put in charge of one of the sections of the Kansas-Pacific railroad.



Top (left)—Red Cloud, Great Sioux War Chief.  
Top (right)—Black Coal, War Chief of the Arapahoes.

Center—Washakie, Chief of the Shoshones.  
Lower (right)—Sharp Nose, Head Chief of the Arapahoes.

Lower (left)—Sitting Bull, Sioux Medicine Man.



## CHAPTER XXVI

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### A SCOUT AFTER HOSTILE CHEYENNES



IN FEBRUARY, 1874, I went with a scouting party commanded by Lieut. Henkle, 5th Infantry, and we captured two Indians who were concerned in the massacre of the Germaine family in 1873, and who, no doubt, belonged to the band that had killed a friend of mine, a hunter named Brown, whose death caused this scouting-expedition.

The detachment consisted of some men from the 5th Infantry, a number of whom were bandsmen. They came from Fort Hays, Kansas, to go on this scout, as there were not sufficient men at Wallace to send out. The garrison at Hays was also depleted, most of the men being with General Miles' expedition in the Indian Territory. We also had Lieut. Hewitt of the 19th Infantry, and some men belonging to that regiment. Three civilians, including myself, accompanied the command, which consisted of thirty-five men.

While out in the open country, a big blizzard struck us, so that we were obliged to seek the nearest shelter, which was some miles away. After some difficulty and suffering, we finally reached a fork of Plum Creek, where we took shelter. Wood was not plentiful. Some of the men were frost-bitten—two or three quite badly. The 19th Infantry had just come up from the South, and were not prepared for such cold weather, and besides, did not know how to take care of themselves. I am quite sure that many of them would have been frozen to death, had it not been for the assistance tendered by the civilians.

On the morning of the third day, it was snowing very hard although the weather had moderated a bit; so we



broke camp. While doing so, we discovered a herd of buffalo at hand. We thought at first that the storm was driving them, but soon discovered that Indians were after them. We spotted the Indians about the time they discovered us. It was a question which was the most surprised. As near as we could tell, there were about a dozen Indians. I parleyed with three of them, making signs for them to come in, throwing my gun down on first one, then another, as each tried to edge away. Finally one escaped, but I brought in the other two. The one who escaped would have been killed if the lieutenant had not cried, "Don't shoot!" for one of the hunters had drawn a bead on the Indian with a Sharps rifle.

I discovered several weeks later that the Indians were camped very near us. Had we known that we were in such close proximity to them, we might have captured or killed most of the band—and vice versa. We were in no condition to follow the Indians, and I advised the officer in command not to follow them mounted. Had we done so, no doubt our little band would have become separated because of poor horsemanship, and the chances are, we should all have been killed. Neither were we in condition to follow them on foot, so it was decided that we had better make for the post with our prisoners—a very wise conclusion. We did not arrive there until quite late at night, and were in pretty bad shape.

Several of the Indians followed us, and continued with us for some hours. When the redskins were first discovered, Allen Clark, one of my herders, jumped into the wagon to get some extra ammunition. He had to open an original box to get it. He grabbed an axe to remove the cover, which was fastened with screws. Another of the party, who had an eye to business, cried out in his excitement, "Don't smash that cover, get a screw-driver and take it off!" Perhaps it is needless to say that the box was opened all right.

On the Friday or Saturday preceding Brown's death, I saw the Indians who I think killed him. I was on Lake

Creek hunting cattle and saw some Indians through my field glasses going north. The following Monday, Brown's body was found lying near his wagon; he had been shot through the head. All the camp equipage had been taken and his horses run off. Brown's body was found some distance north of Lake Creek, where I had seen the Indians two days previously, and the direction they were taking would have brought them to the place where the man had been killed.

We were hunting cattle several weeks later and came across an old Indian camp in a ravine about half a mile from our own camp where we captured the two Indians. We also discovered the tracks of two horses, whose hoof-prints showed that they were animals of unusual size, which proved that they were shod with heel and toe calks. I was sure they were Brown's horses, for the post blacksmith had shod them only two or three days before his death.

The two Indians captured at this camp were Cheyennes, father and son. The boy, Red Eagle, was about fifteen years of age. He was one of my scouts in 1888, at which time I learned that he was one of the Indians we had captured in 1873. I had been in command of the scouts but a short time when Whirlwind, the celebrated chief of the Cheyennes, asked that several scouts be allowed to go with him on a visit to Anadarko agency. I gave permission to three or four of those who had just re-enlisted, to accompany Whirlwind. They had been gone but a day or so, when Red Eagle asked permission to go and visit a sick sister. I thought this might be an excuse to get away and join Whirlwind's party, yet I did not want to refuse him if he were telling the truth, so I questioned him closely.

He informed me that some Indians who had just come in from the place where his sister was encamped, had told him she was very ill. Red Eagle was very fond of her, as she was his only living relative. He told me that he and his father had been captured several years before, and had been

sent to Dry Tortugas, Florida; that enroute, his father had tried to escape by jumping off the train and was killed. He told me the circumstances surrounding his capture, and it tallied with that of the two Indians, as I have given it here.

I gave Red Eagle a ten days' pass as requested. In two or three days he returned, stating that he had found his sister not as ill as had been reported. I was then convinced that he had told me the truth, and that he was the Indian boy I had captured fifteen years previously.

## CHAPTER XXVII

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### BUFFALO HUNTING INCIDENTS



ILLIONS of buffalo were slaughtered for the hides and meat—principally for the hide. Some of the expert hunters made considerable money at that occupation. I knew one hunter whom we called "Kentuck," he presumably being a native of Kentucky. I never knew his real name, and it was not considered polite, in those days, to ask a man what state he hailed from.

"Kentuck," in less than one year, made about \$10,000 hunting buffalo. He had a camp on Punished Woman's Fork, a stream south of Wallace, where he killed 3,700 buffalo. It was known as "the slaughter pen." This killing was done when thousands of the animals were going north. In order that the buffalo might not scent them, the hunter would slip quietly up on the windward side of a herd while they were grazing. They were hunted so much that after awhile they seemed to anticipate this, and at the first crack of a rifle, off they would go like the wind, although the shooter would usually get two or three before they withdrew from range.

The large outfits employed the aid of horses in removing the hide. The skinner would slit the hide from the head down between the legs to the tail and also skin the legs and loosen the hide around the head. A rope was then attached to the skin near the head, and the skin pulled off by the horse. The hides were then taken to camp and pegged out until they were perfectly dry, when they became as hard as flint. The average prices paid by the hide buyers was \$2 for cowskins, \$3 for bull and 75 cents for calf hides. Buf-

falo hides did not make good leather, as they were too spongy. Very few were made into robes.

Unlike the Indian woman, the white man did not know how to treat the hides properly to make good robes. The squaws would peg out the skin, stretching it as much as possible, clean off all the fat and meat with an instrument made of one of the large horns of the elk and used like an adze. The skin was then stretched upright in a frame and scraped down until it was the desired thickness. They were then worked with the hands until the robe was soft and pliable.

Some of the habits of the buffalo herds are clearly fixed in my memory. The bulls were always found on the outer edge, supposedly acting as protectors to the cows and calves. For ten to twenty miles one would often see solid herds of the animals. Keeping on steadily through them one would come to the main herd, consisting of the cows and calves. The old bulls were driven out of the herd by the younger ones. They became poor in flesh and mangy, the fur being useless for robes. Until the hunters commenced to kill them off, their only enemies were the wolves and coyotes. A medium-sized herd, at that time, dotted the prairie for hundreds of miles, and to guess at the number in a herd was like trying to compute the grains of wheat in a granary.

When these immense herds were stampeded, nothing could stop them. The stupidity of the buffalo was remarkable. When one of their number was killed, the rest of the herd, smelling the blood, would become excited, but instead of stampeding, would gather around the dead buffalo, pawing, bellowing and hooking it viciously. Taking advantage of this well-known habit of the creature, the hunter would kill one animal and then wipe out almost an entire herd.

Buffalo hunting was dangerous sport. Although at times it looked like murder, if you took a buffalo in his native element, he had plenty of courage and would fight tenaciously for his life if given an opportunity. Like all other



animals, the buffalo scented danger at a distance and tried to escape by running away, but if he did not escape he would make a stand and fight to the last, for which everyone must respect him. If you rode up alongside him as he ran, and gave him a ball from your rifle, he would turn and charge your horse and then be off again.

There were other dangers to be taken into consideration in hunting the buffalo, chief of which was the possibility of one's horse stumbling or stepping into a prairie dog's hole and breaking a leg, throwing the rider, who might receive a broken limb, or possibly death. I have seen it all. I have seen men who have shot themselves, as well as the horse under them, in their excitement and carelessness. So when one started out after buffalo in those glorious days, he ran many risks.

In the autumn of 1873, I went out on a hunt with Capt. John L. Irwin, Sixth Cavalry, and some English cavalry officers, taking a detachment of men with us. I was riding a horse which the captain had given me. The animal was blind in one eye, and I found that in running buffalo, he would invariably bear toward the blind eye, so that when we got after a herd, this had to be taken into consideration. I used a three-banded, long-barreled rifle, known as a "needle gun." In hunting buffalo, I rode up to them and alongside to the right, the gun resting on my bridle arm, so that when I got opposite the shoulder of the animal, I could fire—and usually I got them.

We located a small herd of five or six, and started for them. The captain cried out, "Try to get the bunch!" so off we went. I tried to get on the right side of the herd, but miscalculated, and I was carried around so the herd was on my right. So I had to bring my gun over to my right side to shoot. I could not take aim, but fired and broke the back of a buffalo. A sergeant was coming up on my left whom I did not see when I fired, but as I brought my gun

back to reload, I observed him. I yelled, "Look out!" but instead of holding up or turning his horse to the left, he attempted to pass me, thinking—as he told me later—that he could do so. Being on the "blind side" my horse did not see him quickly enough, so all I could do was to settle back in my saddle and pull on the reins as hard as possible in an effort to avert a catastrophe. It was too late, however, and I ran into him, knocking his horse over. The animal took a terrible fall, and I thought I had killed the sergeant. When we got to him he was insensible, but soon recovered. It was discovered that he had sustained a broken shoulder and was quite badly bruised otherwise. I was not to blame, as the blind horse was the cause of the accident.

The Englishmen thought my shot was wonderful. It was never explained to them that the shot was accidental, but on the other hand, they were told some remarkable stories about my marksmanship. They thought I was a wonder. The soldiers used to take great delight in "stuffing the tenderfeet," as they called the newcomers.

Another time I went on a hunt with Mr. Treadway of the Denver News and Mr. Fisher, of the firm of Daniels, Fisher & Co., Denver. Lieut. Wallace, 3d Infantry, accompanied us. I furnished the mounts for the party, and as the lieutenant was a good horseman, I let him ride one of my best animals. It was considered one of the fastest horses in that part of the country.

We came across an old buffalo bull—but a lively one—and ran him into a gulch, wounded, where he put up a good fight. The plan was to let the Denver people do the killing, as they had never been on a buffalo hunt, although they had seen thousands of the monarchs of the prairie. Our guests were not having very good success in knocking the old bull out, so the lieutenant rode up to help them. He rode within a few yards of the enraged bull, when the animal charged the lieutenant's horse. The officer had partially turned the

horse around to get out of the buffalo's way, but was not quick enough, and the bull struck the horse in the fleshy part of one of its hind quarters. The horn penetrated clear to the bone, making an ugly triangular wound. Had the horse been gored anywhere else, it would no doubt have been its death wound. It was the first time this horse had engaged in a buffalo hunt, and of course did not realize the danger. I had no means of stopping the flow of blood, but I packed the wound with dirt, and on my arrival at the post, I threw the horse, cleansed the wound, and sewed it up. In a few weeks the horse recovered, but there remained an ugly scar.

On another of my hunting excursions with some of my friends, I had Edward Lane and Joe Farrell with me, both of whom I have mentioned heretofore. We came across a small herd of buffalo composed mostly of cows and calves. Lane and Farrell rode alongside them, singling out two cows with calves. They killed the cows, and when the animals dropped, the calves remained with their mothers. The little creatures were about six weeks old, and the next day we loaded them into my wagon and started for the ranch. They were too young to graze, so we fed them on condensed milk. When we first arrived at the ranch they were very hungry, and I had a cow whose calf had been killed by wolves, driven into the corral with the buffalo calves. She was very much afraid of them, but the calves made a rush for her, bunting her into one corner of the corral, where they succeeded in nursing her. In a day or so she became reconciled to them and grew very fond of her unnatural babies. The cow soon commenced to lose flesh, the nursing of the two calves being too much on her; so I had her driven in to the post, in order that she might feed on the refuse from the quartermaster's stables. That night she returned to her adopted children, jumping off a bank six feet high in order to get into the corral where the calves were.

I decided to drive them all in to the post, so they could feed off the manure heap. It was pretty good picking for

them, and they thrived very well. I kept them over two years. They were beauties, and I tried to sell them to the Barnum & Bailey Circus. They offered me \$200 for them if I would deliver them at Kansas City, which I declined to do, as the shipping charges alone would have been nearly that sum. I was rather disappointed with their offer, as I had an idea they were worth at least \$1,000. Shortly afterwards, a herd of cattle was passing through on its way to Colorado, and I traded the young buffaloes for some lame cows. I disposed of them for the reason that they were getting very large.

It was considered unsafe to cross the buffalo with domestic cattle, because of the belief that the cow could not deliver her calf, owing to the peculiar construction of the frame (hump) of the buffalo. I believe that theory was afterward exploded by "Buffalo" Jones in Oklahoma. I understand; too, that at one time Miller Brothers, on their 101 Ranch in Oklahoma, were crossing buffalo with cattle and having very good success, calling the new progeny "cattelo." It was thought that by crossing the breed, it would develop much hardier cattle.

On one of my hunts, I came very near losing my life. I had wounded what was called a "spike"—a bull, which is a two-year-old with short, sharp horns. I had put one bullet into him, but not in a vital spot, so tried another shot. About the time I was ready to shoot, my horse stepped into a prairie dog hole, and over he went! I intuitively threw myself away from the horse, so he did not fall on me. The "spike" was nearly all in, and stopped near where I parted company with my horse. He saw me and came for me. I held onto my gun, and as good luck would have it, there was a shot in the chamber, so I blazed away, hitting the bull in the breast. He dropped dead within five yards of me. When I fell off my horse, my gun plowed along the ground and some dirt entered the muzzle. When I fired, the barrel



was split about six inches from the muzzle. I was able to file off the barrel, which made it more like a carbine and improved the gun very materially for mounted hunting.

The most successful mounted hunting of buffalo I ever did, occurred once when I was haying at my ranch. One day while running the mowing machine, quite a herd of buffalo passed, going south. This was the first of the animals we had seen for several days. I had about a dozen men in my employ, and thought this was a good chance to get some fresh meat for them. I unhitched my team from the mower and took the harness off "Hano," my private horse, one of the best-trained animals for buffalo hunting in the country.

I had my gun with me, for I kept one on the mowing machine for emergencies. I told the man who was operating the horse rake to come out with the wagon to bring the meat in to camp. He inquired if I were not counting my chickens before they were hatched, but I replied, "Never you mind; do as I tell you. If I don't get a buffalo, it won't be your fault." Then I jumped on "Hano" bareback and off I went to overtake the herd.

The animals had not been frightened, and when I reached the table-land, were grazing quietly along. I rode out of the head of a gulch, and succeeded in getting quite close before they saw me. I killed seven of them in ten shots, some of them dropping so close together that it looked as if one could jump from one carcass to the next. I don't think I ran them over half a mile, and could have killed more had I wished. I ran alongside some of them so close that when I fired the hair was singed. After each shot, "Hano" would swerve a little and carry me along to the side of another. It was murder, but I wanted meat. Most of my shots struck just back of the left shoulder. Other shots were used to finish those that were wounded and could not escape. I saved the saddles, loins, tongues and brains, and there was no meat wasted, as I sent some of it in to the post.



On one occasion I was out with a scouting party of two troops of the Tenth Cavalry. We were encamped for the night near some water holes, and the sun was just going down, when our attention was called to a sound which resembled the rustling of leaves in a forest. It seemed to be coming nearer, then increased to a rumbling, and we thought the wind was rising. Some said a storm was coming; but we thought that strange, as it was a clear, beautiful evening.

Suddenly the ground seemed to tremble, and almost instantly we heard the thunderous tread of thousands of hoofs. "Buffalo stampede!" yelled several of the men. They were headed straight for our camp—thousands of them.

Tremendous excitement reigned immediately. It looked very much as if the buffaloes were going to run over us. The commanding officer ordered his men to fire upon them, with a view of turning the herd. At the report of the guns, the herd seemed to hesitate, but only for a few seconds, as others behind were pushing the leaders along. It looked pretty serious, but at last they commenced to open out to the right and left of our camp. Our horses were on their lines in the rear of the camp, and our wagons which held the forage were lined up on our right. The buffalo cleared our camp a hundred yards or more on our left, but on our right we did not fare so well, for they struck two of our three wagons which were loaded with forage, toppling two of them over and breaking them up badly. The mules were attached to the wagons and off they went. We never did get them all back. It was a very narrow escape. Had they struck us squarely, we doubtless would have been knocked out as badly as if a cyclone had passed through our midst.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

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### MY MINING EXPERIENCE



AT A GOVERNMENT sale I had purchased a condemned horse and mule and a lot of harness, which cost me about \$100. I had a wagon that I had purchased from Joe North some little time before his sudden death, worth about \$60. With this outfit, I made up a very good work team.

Then I traded the outfit to a party from Denver for a house and lot. There was a small cottage on the lot, which was renting for \$12 a month. The owner and his partner wanted to go hunting buffalo, which, at that time, was very profitable. There was a mortgage on the place for \$600. I gave the owner my team complete, about \$200 worth of merchandise, including guns, ammunition, groceries and \$300 in cash. I afterward sold the property for \$2,500 to a party to whom I owed some money. I was not obliged to dispose of it, and was confident it would be of considerable value some day because of its location; but I wanted to get out of debt.

Some years later I was in Denver, sitting on the porch of the Taber Hotel, talking with some gentlemen. I pointed to a lot diagonally across the street, and asked them what it was worth. They told me it had just been sold for \$15,000 to a syndicate which intended to erect one of the largest office buildings in the city. I told them that at one time I owned the property and sold it for \$2,500.

In the spring of 1873, owing to the scarcity of the animals, buffalo hunting was practically discontinued. Undoubtedly most of the herds had been killed off. When the buffalo disappeared, the hunters did likewise. My busi-

ness was mostly with them, as the troops at the post had been reduced to one company of infantry.

I had on hand a number of horses, mules and wagons, which I had accumulated in trading with the hunters and emigrants passing through the country, and from which I was deriving no income. I was obliged to dispose of them elsewhere, as there was no demand for them at Wallace.

The San Juan mining country was just then receiving considerable notice in the papers, and many people were going there. I thought it might be a good country in which to dispose of my outfit. So I decided to load my wagons with the surplus goods that I had in the store and start for the San Juan county, via Las Animas and Pueblo, Colo. I had eight four-horse-and-mule teams, and one wagon with two horses, which I drove. It was a valuable train. One pair of horses weighed 3,200 pounds. I bought this team from a party from Missouri, who had gone to Colorado to make their home, but did not like the country, and were on their way back to "good ol' Mizzoury," as they expressed it. One pair of mules weighed nearly as much as the horses. I traded with the Southern Overland Stage Company for them. They were too large for the stage business, and had run away on one or two occasions.

I stopped at Las Animas a day or so while waiting for a shipment of goods that I had purchased in the East. Las Animas was the terminus of a branch road of the Kansas-Pacific running from Kit Carson. While there I discharged one of my teamsters, as I was about to move out. Daniel Daney, an old schoolmate of mine, who had charge of the corral where my stock was quartered, said he would like to go with me. I said, "All right, jump on." He had heard one of the men call me "Homer," and asked me if I formerly lived in Winona, Minn., and attended Mrs. Henry's school. I answered, "Yes." He then told me his name and I recognized him as one of my old schoolmates. He

had been a lieutenant in the 20th Infantry, and in the consolidation and reorganization of the army (in 1869, I believe), he was an extra officer—took a year's pay and went out of the service.

On the way to Pueblo, we passed through the Purgatory and Rocky Ford country, where the celebrated melons, known all over the country, are now raised in such abundance. Little did I dream then that that country of sagebrush and sand, would one day be one of the garden spots of the United States. Irrigation has made that soil to blossom like the rose.

From Pueblo to old Fort Garland, on the Rio Grande river, I went over the Moscow Pass, taking the first wagons that went through the Pass. The road had not been completed, but by good management, we got through by doubling teams in many steep places. On one mountain side, we snubbed our wagons down by ropes. We took all the animals off the vehicles, save the wheel teams, attached a rope to the axle and thus lowered the wagons. Some of my teamsters had freighted in the mountains and were skilled in mountain work. My experience here was very useful to me in handling transportation after I came into the service. The builder of the road was very anxious to get wagons started going over his toll road, and told me if I would go his route, he would not make any charge. I thus saved a few dollars which paid me very well. Moreover, it was a shorter route.

From Garland we went up the Rio Grande to Loma, a little hamlet opposite Del Norte. Here I leased a store and opened up for business. There was a scarcity of flour, which made prices pretty high, so I sent my wagons to Canyon City for 35,000 pounds of "Rough and Ready" brand. This I shipped from Denver. When my teams returned the price of flour had declined materially, but I made good freight money. Flour came in from Taos,

N. M., the wheat having been threshed out by driving sheep and goats over the ground, and then cleaned by the wind. For that reason the housewives preferred my flour. There was no demand for mules or horses, so I sent my outfit back to Wallace. Later, I sold a pair of very large horses and mules to a party who had the contract to plow the fire-guard for the Union Pacific railroad.

I spent the Fourth of July in Loma. We had a lively celebration, the miners coming forty and fifty miles to help us celebrate. A number of Mexicans were among the party. We had all kinds of games—climbing a greased pole to secure the prize, a \$5 gold piece, which was placed on top of the pole; catching pigs that had been shaved and greased—the party catching the pig getting the animal, grease and all. The Mexicans took a hand in this, and thought it great sport. To wind up the festivities, we had a Mexican burro, with a \$5 prize to whoever could ride it. It was a lively little animal and succeeded in throwing two or three riders. About this time, we were all feeling “pretty good.” I made a bet that I could ride the beast if they would hold him until I was on his back, and not turn him loose until I gave the word. I got on him facing his tail, then secured a twist on one of his ears with my left hand, and seized his tail with my right. Then I locked my legs around his body as well as I could, and told them to let him go. I had seen this trick done at a circus. We certainly had a monkey-and-parrot time of it. When the beast found he could not get me off, he laid down and tried to roll me off. I opened my legs, but kept hold of his ear and tail; then the little animal got to his feet and tried to rub me off against the porch of a gun shop. Not succeeding, he bolted inside the store and tipped over one of the show-cases, doing considerable damage. That ended the circus. I was declared the winner, and the “champion burro rider of the Rio Grande.” But my \$5 gold piece had to go toward paying for the damage done in the gun shop.



Loma did not turn out to be a good business place, so I moved over to Del Norte after a few months. I closed out my business at a loss, selling a bill of goods to the cashier of one of the banking houses who was interested in a store in one of the mining camps. He told me to step into the store and he would pay me. The bill amounted to nearly a thousand dollars. I told him that I was not quite ready to leave the country, and did not want to carry the money on my person, but would call for it when I wanted it. In the meantime, the firm failed and I lost my money. Some two years later, I saw in one of the San Juan papers that this same cashier was the Recorder of one of the mining districts. I wrote him for my money. He answered that he would pay his share of the bill by installments, but was not able to pay the full amount, and that his partner was living in Europe. I accepted this proposition, feeling that "half a loaf was better than none," and finally got what had been promised from the cashier, but the remainder was a total loss.

While here I traded some goods and part cash for two lots costing me \$150. Shortly after I had made the purchase, an owner of a burro corral wanted to buy the lots for the purpose of using them for a corral. I told him he might have them for \$300. I went to a Mr. Van Guesin, who lived in a pretty house adjoining my lots, and told him a party wished to buy them to use for a corral, but that I didn't care to sell them for that purpose. Mr. Van Guesin thereupon offered me \$325 for them, which offer I accepted.

In March, 1912, I was on the steamer "Ismailia" going from Alexandria, Egypt, to Greece. I met a party who were from Colorado and in our general conversation, I learned that they formerly lived in Del Norte. I related the above incident to them, and a lady in the party said that Mr. Van Guesin was her uncle. This was nearly forty years later.

Upon my arrival at Loma, about the first man I met was a Dr. Dorr, whom I had known at Wallace a year before.

He was prospecting Western Kansas for coal and oil. He gave the officers at Wallace a very interesting lecture on the mineral deposits of Kansas. Dr. Dorr said he had some good prospects in the Summit district, and wanted me to help him out. I became interested with him, and we organized the Telluric Mining District, adjoining the Summit. We had some very good prospects, the ore assaying \$15 and upward in gold, silver and iron. The doctor explained to me that the iron ore (which ran 10 per cent in some of the assays) was a valuable flux in the fusion of the ore.

On one of our leads, we erected a good log cabin. The doctor and my man, Dany, were to open up the mine during the winter. I made arrangements with Mark Bidell, a merchant of Del Norte, to let them have a reasonable amount of stores, and I left the country, via Denver. While there, I bought a mining outfit, including a forge, steel for drills, etc. (they were to sharpen their own drills), and shipped the outfit to them. The purchase amounted to about \$150. The next news I had from them was that water was running into the mine, and they needed a pump, and as they knew I was not able to put one in the plant, they would shut down for the winter—the doctor, intending to practice his profession, while Dany would endeavor to get a school to teach. I later received a letter from Bidell, stating that the doctor and Dany were doing nothing, but were both drinking freely. He advised me to shut off some of their privileges. They had hired a little cabin and were doing their own cooking. I accordingly countermanded my order to Bidell for goods, giving them only a month's supply. Probably I would not have done this, had I not met with some business reverses, and was obliged to retrench. I had left seven or eight good burros with them. When I was ready to leave the country, I had some trouble in finding my two horses. I had turned them out above the cabin. I knew they could not get out of the canyon without passing where we had been at work.

While looking for them, I heard loud yelling up the mountain side. It was the doctor. I hastened there and he had a big ball of mud in his hand, declaring excitedly, "We have struck it bigger than a wolf." He started in to tell me what the ball was composed of, but in an angry voice, I exclaimed, "Damn your strike! I want to find my horses and get out of the country." He retorted, "Damn you and your horses! Here we have the world by the breeches and you do not appreciate it!" I found my horses and the next day started for home.

I made a trip to the little mining camp of Howardsville some time after I left for home, about 130 miles from Del Norte. I think it was on the Animas river or one of its tributaries. The camp was composed of about a dozen log cabins, and was located at the mouth of Cunningham Gulch, named for the man who discovered the pass.

The Little Giant mine was near by. It was owned by a New York syndicate and was in litigation at the time. The court was in session in a log cabin, and there was considerable excitement at the time. The judge, fearing trouble, had sworn in several miners as marshals to protect the court. I here met some miners who were very anxious for me to purchase a half interest in the North Star mine, which they had located and were developing. A Frenchman, named Gupell, owned a half interest. He furnished the men with a grub stake and also the money for the food, for a one-half interest in all they discovered; they were to do the work.

Mr. Gupell was a small ranchman and not able to furnish the necessary money to develop the mine. He was willing to sell his half for \$1,000. I went to the mine, and found they had done quite a little work and had considerable ore on the dump. They selected several pieces of ore which they thought was about the average. I was to take it to Del Norte and have it assayed. If the result pleased me, I was to purchase Mr. Gupell's interest. We were to pack

the ore in sacks to Antelope Park, where my wagons could reach it, and I was to haul it to Canyon City, about 200 miles, to be milled. It was thought that the ore would pay me well for transporting it, and would more than pay for the developing of the mine. Three miners were to do the work.

On my way out, I stopped to see Mr. Gupell. I made an agreement with him that in the assaying of the ore, if it met with my expectations, I would give him \$1,000 for his half interest. He was to take in part payment, a pair of horses, wagon, harness, and merchandise out of my store, with some cash. I had the assay made, which ran \$167.50 to the ton. I consulted the assayer, who was a friend of mine, and my friend Bidell. They said the assay was good, but that there were many mines in that district which were assaying much higher, and the chances were that I could buy a half interest in several mines for that money. Thereupon I decided not to make the purchase.

Now for the aftermath: Before I left the country, that mine was purchased for \$30,000 by Mr. Van Guesin, who was the agent for Jay Cook & Co., bankers of New York city. A year or so after that, I read the official report of E. H. Ruffner, engineer's office of the Department of Missouri. He mentioned several mines in the San Juan district, and the North Star mine was given as the richest one in the entire group!

On my return to Del Norte, and after coming out of Cunningham gulch, where snow and ice remained the year around, I got off the trail in a blinding blizzard. After floundering around in the snow, my horse at times clear down to his belly, I got back on the trail, and as I got down to snow line the storm subsided. I soon reached Pole Creek, where I had to remain all night, because of high water caused by melting of the snow during the day time. In the night the water ran out, so by morning I could ford the


stream safely. Knowing that I would have to do this, I had provided myself with all the comforts of camp—extra blanket, knife and fork, sack of ground coffee, bread and a piece of bacon; also a feed for my horse. I made him comfortable, fixed my coffee, and then was ready to retire. I built two fires, spreading my blankets between them, and with my saddle for a pillow, was soon fast asleep. My boots were wet through from tramping in the snow, so I made sure to put them carefully near the fire to dry them. When I arose and attempted to draw them on, they were still quite damp, and my horse was not in sight or hearing. He had pulled up his picket-pin and no doubt had started back on the trail.

As the horse had to be found immediately, I left my boots drying near the fire, and from an old grain sack manufactured a pair of "California moccasins," then started out to locate the animal. Just before I got to the snow line, I found him grazing. I went back to camp, where I found my boots VERY much dried—nearly burned up, in fact, and I was obliged to return to Del Norte wearing the California moccasins.



## CHAPTER XXIX

### LIEUT. HENELY'S FIGHT ON SAPPA CREEK, KAS.

N APRIL, 1875, I sent a party of five men, thoroughly armed, in charge of H. A. Clark (now a prominent citizen of Wallace, Kan.), to gather up cattle that were supposed to have drifted down on Punished Woman's Fork, some forty miles from Wallace.

A few days later, I received a dispatch from Clark, dated at a station on the Santa Fe railroad, saying his party had been corraled by Indians on Punished Woman's Fork, and he had succeeded in driving them off and they had started in a northerly direction.

I showed the dispatch to Major Hambright, 5th Infantry, the commanding officer at Fort Wallace, who telegraphed to Gen. Pope, the department commander at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, as there were no cavalry stationed at Fort Wallace. The general ordered a detachment of Troop H, 6th Cavalry, in command of Lieut. Austin Henely from Fort Lyon, Colorado, to Wallace, a distance of 125 miles. They marched to Kit Carson, Colorado, sixty miles, and there entrained for Wallace. They arrived on the 18th. We all moved out on the morning of the 19th with forty men and two six-mule wagons for transporting forage and rations. The post surgeon, Dr. Atkins, and Lieut. C. C. Hewitt, 19th Infantry, accompanied the expedition.

The commanding officer and Lieut. Henely thought we ought to go direct to the place where my men were corraled. I suggested that we might be able to cut their trail, as when the Indians were last seen, they were going north, and if they had done so, would doubtless take the old Indian trail east of Wallace, some thirty-five miles. It would not take

much longer to try out their trail, and if we did not succeed in striking it, we then could go on to Punished Woman's Fork.

These officers had just come into the country, and had had no Indian experience, so they readily fell in with my suggestion. About noon we struck a fresh Indian trail of some twelve or fifteen lodges, just where I thought we would, and as our transportation was cumbersome, the lieutenant cached one of his wagons in a deep ravine, attaching the extra mules to the other wagon. We took nothing with us but what was absolutely necessary, and were quickly ready for a forced march. We traveled rapidly until dark, and then bivouacked. It rained on us nearly all night; we had no tentage, and the men had only their overcoats to protect them from the storm.

We could make no coffee, as there was no wood in the country, and even if there had been, it would not have been advisable to build a fire, as it might have been seen by the enemy. The night passed as pleasantly as could have been expected under the circumstances. We moved out early the next morning, and found that the trail had been almost obliterated, and experienced considerable trouble in following it.

We reached the Union Pacific railroad about noon. There the Indians seemed to have scattered—I think intentionally. Not that they knew we were on their trail, but they do not like to be seen when passing through the country, so took this means of passing in small parties, thinking that the railroad people would be less likely to notice them. The railroad officials usually notified the troops when large bodies of Indians were crossing the railroad, and doubtless the Indians were aware of this.

After crossing the railway, we were unable to find a sign of the trail for some time. When a trail is lost, the order of procedure is for the men to circle around and see if they can pick it up. Each time the circle is made a little larger

until it is found. Finally, Private James T. Ayers reported that he had found a single pony-track about half a mile to our right. This single track was followed for some miles, when it was lost completely. There were a great many wild horses in that part of the country at the time. We were on their range, and could not follow the Indian trail longer.

Not discouraged, we continued north, knowing the Indians would come together sooner or later on some one of the many small streams in that country. That night we camped at the headwaters of the Solomon River. Here we held a council of war, and I suggested a plan which was finally adopted. We moved out the next morning at daylight, and about nine o'clock met some hunters whom I knew. They told us that the Indians we were after, were on the north fork of Sappa Creek, and that they had robbed their (the hunters') camp the previous day while the men were absent. The latter thought the redskins might be about seventeen miles from us, as they did not believe the Indians would travel much further. There were plenty of buffalo, and they would stop to have a hunt.

I prevailed upon the hunters to turn back and show us where the savages were at the time they robbed the camp. We marched about six miles, and camped in a deep ravine until sundown, when we continued on to within five miles of Sappa Creek. Here we halted and went into camp.

As stated, we had calculated that the Indians would not go much further than this creek, for they must have had good luck hunting, and were bound to go into camp at the first opportunity and have a feast. I proposed to the hunters that we start out after dark and try to locate the Indian camp. Acting upon this suggestion, the lieutenant loaned us black horses to ride, as they could not be plainly distinguished in the night time.

Nothing occurred to attract our attention until we arrived on the next stream, the north fork of Sappa. Here



Chief Washakie (center), his son Dick Washakie (left), and Sub-chiefs. From the collection of E. A. Brininstool.





the hunters thought they could distinguish the Indian camp in the bottom. They wanted to return and inform the lieutenant that we had found the camp, but my eyes were not as good as theirs. I could not see anything resembling an Indian camp, and told them it was nothing but some white banks or alkali spots. I wanted them to go with me to investigate, but they refused.

Finally I told them if they would remain behind, I would go forward on foot and ascertain if they were correct. I thought best to go on foot, lest my horse should whinney if taken away from the others, which would have alarmed the Indians, and our game would have decamped.

I followed on down the gulley several hundred yards, then crawled on my hands and knees for some distance, finally coming in sight of the objects the hunters had seen. As I had expected, it proved to be only white alkaline banks. I went back, tired and disgusted. We then followed down the stream some distance, when the hunters again thought they had found another camp—which proved to be two old buffalo bulls.

The men said they would go no further, as it was clear that the Indians were not on that stream. I asked them how far it was to timber, and they said about twelve miles. I told them the chances were that the Indians had struck for shelter, as it was cold and disagreeable, and I suggested that we ride on and ascertain; but they refused, so I started off alone. After riding some distance, I discovered that they were following me, and felt better, even though they were a few hundred yards behind.

These men were not cowards. One of them, "Hank" Campbell, had been in an Indian fight with me on a previous occasion, when we captured two Indians who proved to be part of the band that killed the Germaine family on the Smoky, and were sent to the Dry Tortugas, Florida. The hunters thought the Indians were not on that creek, and it

was stubbornness on my part that prompted me to go on further; so I crept cautiously on, keeping my eyes open as I went down the stream. It was still dark, as the moon had not yet risen. The stream was crooked and boggy; I was weary and had about made up my mind that I had taken too big a contract. Presently my courage rose, for I discovered fresh horse-manure; although the droppings might have been made by wild horses which roamed in that country.

In the meantime the moon arose, and I had less trouble in finding my way. At last I rode up on a ridge and carefully looked over the top. Here I saw some horses grazing in the bend of the river. At first I thought they were wild horses, but soon found I was mistaken, for they had seen me and did not seem frightened.

I remained there until the hunters came up, when I told them to look over the ridge and see if they could locate anything. One of them exclaimed, "Holy smoke! there they are!" and started to ride away. I grabbed his bridle rein and told him to keep quiet; that there was no danger, as the horses were not frightened, and the Indians must be in camp below them. The thing to do was to ride slowly and cautiously away for a short distance, so as not to alarm the ponies, and then speed back and inform the lieutenant of our discovery.

This we did, arriving in camp about two o'clock. The lieutenant was called, and the men were ordered to saddle up at once without any unnecessary noise. Within a half hour we were on the march. I struck out in a northeasterly direction. The hunters started northwest and the lieutenant followed them, but soon discovered I was not with them. He sent his trumpeter to me to tell me the hunters thought I was going too far toward the east. I told him to tell the lieutenant that I was the man who had found the horses, and knew I was not mistaken in the direction. The officer soon joined me, and said the hunters had been in that country for

some time and knew it better than I did. I remarked, "Very well, sir; you take their advice and I will ride home."

He said, "Mr. Wheeler, I have acted on your judgment so far and it has not failed me yet. I will not go back on you. Lead on."

Upon reaching the divide, I told him to keep just at the head of the breaks running down into the stream, and I would go nearer the stream and keep down it, where I could see everything, and when I discovered the camp I would not be long in letting them know it. Within an hour or so after leaving him, I discovered the herd again in the same place where we had left them, but could not locate the Indian camp. I turned back and reported to the lieutenant, who then made his plan of attack.

I then left him, followed the stream down and discovered the camp a few hundred yards below the horses. By this time the ponies had been rounded up, and it was near daybreak. Three or four of the tepees were old and nearly the color of dead grass. I did not see them until quite near them. No one was stirring in the camp; not even the dogs had given the alarm, as they usually do when prowlers are around.

Hearing a slight noise, I looked around and saw, not more than two hundred yards away, an Indian herder running for dear life to notify the camp of the approach of enemies. The Indians were instantly stirring, and I saw them come pouring from their tepees as I started to warn the lieutenant.

We had some difficulty in crossing the stream, as it was boggy. None of the men followed us. The sergeant said it was impossible for the men to cross there. The lieutenant remarked, "We have crossed; now every man of you must cross." The troopers then rode in without further hesitation, and after much floundering, all crossed safely, although one man lost his carbine and another his pistol.

We moved up and ordered the Indians to surrender, making signs which they well understood. One warrior said in pretty good English, "Go 'way, John; bring back our ponies." They then fired on us, and the fun commenced.

I must have been greatly excited, for I remember little of what was going on during the next few minutes. When I recovered my senses, I was lying on the ground pumping lead into the Indians. It was a hand-to-hand conflict. Two of our men, Sergeant Papier and Private Robert Themis, were killed within a few feet of the Indians. Themis was our cook, and was supposed to remain with the wagon—in fact, was told to do so. Poor fellow! He lost his life by not obeying instructions.

One of the Indians reached over the bank and secured one of the troopers' guns and used it against us. The lieutenant had some trouble in getting his men to lie down. They fought like madmen. Their whole desire seemed to be to charge the Indians and drive them out. Finally we got down to business, and whenever an Indian showed his head, we would shoot at it. It seemed as if we never would drive them out. Some of them hid behind the creek bank, and the men could only see them when they raised their heads to shoot.

I went around to the rear, unnoticed by them, but to do this had to crawl some distance on my hands and knees through the grass. From my new position, I could see the Indians lying along the bank, and I soon drove them from this position. As soon as they had discovered me, they all commenced firing on me, and made it mighty uncomfortable, and I was not slow to leave my dangerous position. I had to run the gauntlet for some fifty yards in order to reach a place of safety. I ran in a zigzag manner, falling down two or three times, which no doubt saved me, as the bullets whistled around me as thick as bees when swarming—at least I imagined so.

While in that position, a large Indian dog came running toward me. I was somewhat frightened and was about to shoot it. When about five yards from me, the animal turned and ran in a different direction, evidently having just discovered me. I felt much relieved. I joined one of the detachments to the left, and volunteered to lead a charge.

When we arrived at the rifle pits, a big Indian jumped out of one of the holes and fired at us, the ball passing through my cartridge box. A young soldier—a mere boy—and myself ran after him. The soldier was several feet in advance of me, firing at the Indian with his six-shooter. He emptied it as the Indian dropped down behind a little ridge and took dead aim at the soldier. Throwing up my gun, I “beat the Indian to it,” and shot him through the head, killing him instantly. This was the first knowledge the soldier had that I was near him. He grasped my hand, with tears in his eyes, and thanked me for saving his life. This was the last Indian in the fight, and was no doubt one of the chiefs. He had a three-banded Springfield rifle, which was half-cocked and a cartridge was in the chamber. I shot so quickly that the Indian did not have time to pull the trigger.

The soldier and I divided his ornaments. I got the war bonnet, afterward presenting it to Gen. Pope at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, after coming into the service. There are only four feathers in the tail of an eagle that are ever used in making war bonnets.

It was near noon when we finished destroying the camp, and we moved at once for Fort Wallace, as we were sure there were other Indians in the country. About eleven o'clock that night, it commenced to rain and snow very hard, and the men had so much trouble in driving the captured stock, that we had to halt until daylight, and during the night lost most of them. I was completely tired out, not having had any sleep for thirty hours, so I wrapped my saddle blanket around me, leaned against a wagon wheel and went



to sleep. When I was awakened, I found that Lieut. Henely had thrown his cape over me, and had himself been without any covering during the storm. We moved out as soon as it was light enough to see. It commenced to snow about one o'clock, and continued until we reached Sheridan station, where we went into camp.

Lieut. Hewitt and I went to the section house to sleep. Early the next morning, Dr. Atkins came to our door and knocked. He informed us that it had turned very cold during the night, and they had suffered a great deal. When the lieutenant got the men together, there were several missing, and he was afraid they had wandered off and perhaps frozen to death, and he desired the doctor to wire the post for succor. I asked the doctor to delay wiring until I could see the lieutenant. I told Henely that we had done so well I did not like to have him ask for assistance if we could avoid it—that we had better make a thorough search for the missing men, and could then wire if they were not found.

Dr. Atkins suggested that the men might be covered with snow. He found a pole and commenced to poke it into some of the drifts where he thought they might be. Finally he heard a faint voice crying out, "Stop that! You are hurting me; get off my feet!"

"Here they are!" shouted the doctor. All hands immediately went to work and dug out the missing men. They all said that they had not suffered, but had put in a comfortable night. It seems that they had located under a little bank to break the wind, and the snow had blown over them, acting as a comforter, and they had slept "like a bug in a rug."

Too much cannot be said in praise of Lieut. Henely's gallantry and management of the fight. It showed that he was a commander of men. His coolness while under fire was very noticeable. He had served a short time in the Civil War, and had been appointed to West Point from the

ranks. Shortly after the Sappa Creek fight, he was ordered to Arizona with his regiment, the 6th Cavalry, and was there with Lieut. Rucker in charge of Apache scouts. They were both drowned forty miles south of Fort Bowie while crossing a swollen stream during a storm. I was very sorry to learn that the lieutenant's career was so suddenly cut off. Had he lived and been given the opportunity, he would have made an enviable record in the service. He was a natural-born soldier. Lieut. Hewitt deserved mention, he having taken an active part in the fight, and having assisted in rounding up the ponies. About 150 animals were captured, including a Mexican burro which belonged to me. There were six or seven very fine mules in the bunch.

Dr. Atkins, a contract surgeon, also deserved great praise for his actions, not only during the fight, but on the entire trip. He risked his life in going where the men were killed and bringing their bodies away, under fire from the Indians.

These officers should have been breveted for their actions in this fight. Department commanders had become tired of recommending officers for brevet, however, because Congress failed to act upon their recommendations, so merely mentioned them in orders, thanking them for their service, as was done in this instance. I presume these orders were filed away in the archives at Washington, but in those days the War Department was not as particular about an officer's record as it has been for the past few years.

The enlisted men could not have done better. They all showed great courage—in fact, they were over-zealous and risked their lives when there was no necessity. Sergeant Kitchen, senior non-commissioned officer, afterward re-enlisted in the Fifth Cavalry, and was first sergeant of Troop I for several years. Later, he was made quartermaster sergeant in the quartermaster department, where he served faithfully for years, and is now retired. Corp. Jas. T.

Ayers, who was of great service in trailing the Indians, enlisted in the Fifth Cavalry. In 1895 he was a general service man at General Miles' headquarters, Chicago.

Shortly after our return from the fight, my men located the ponies we had lost during the storm, and were driving them in to the post. Mrs. Robinson, wife of an officer, sent one of her boys into the store to tell me the men were coming in with the ponies. I rushed out and told them to return them to camp. They told me they thought they would bring them in, as they might get some ponies by so doing. I told them that they were strays and did not belong to the government. In the meantime, Sergeant Kitchen came up with a guard and said the commanding officer had sent him for the ponies. I told him they were mine, and that the men were taking them out to the ranch. He said, "Oh, no. I recognize that pony over there; it is one that you rode on our return from the fight."

Therefore, to my regret, I had to turn the ponies over to Sergeant Kitchen. He said he was sorry to take them, but "orders were orders." Later on, I went to the quartermaster's corral and cut out five or six mules and four ponies (I didn't have time to take any more). I kept the mules and gave the ponies to my men. These ponies were afterward sold at auction by the Government. I think that the Indians we wiped out were some that escaped from Gen. Nelson A. Miles in his winter campaign of 1874 or 1875.

In a day or so I went on another scout to the Punished Woman's Fork. We saw no Indians, but I found that the Indians we had fought had killed at least one hundred head of my cattle. On their trail we found several cows with my brand that they had killed, just cutting out the tongues and unborn calves. The latter, as well as the tongues, are a great delicacy with the Indians. I also found in one place the skeletons of thirty-two head of cattle. This was on Punished Woman's Fork, near where my men were corraled.

It is probably needless to add that the Government never paid me for them. I presume my papers in the premises are carefully filed away "for future action." These were only a few of my many experiences. I not only had Indians to contend with, but was bothered by cattle and horse thieves.

I received my commission in the army for my services in this fight. General Pope recommended it. I knew nothing about his recommendation until I received my appointment. I was opening the mail, and found an envelope addressed to Second Lieutenant Homer W. Wheeler. Enclosed was my appointment, to my great surprise. The same mail brought me a letter from Major McKee Dunn, who was on General Pope's staff, congratulating me on my appointment. I hesitated some little time before accepting it, but finally closed out my business satisfactorily and entered the service in October, 1875, and have never regretted it.

I have been asked on several occasions if graduates of West Point did not think they were a little better than those officers who were appointed from civil life and from the ranks, and treated them accordingly. I have also several times seen such a question asked in the newspapers. If there is such a feeling I have never seen it shown. General Royal, a veteran of the Mexican and Civil wars (well known by older officers), while on one of his tours of inspection, asked me that question. I told him that these officers had always treated me with the greatest consideration, and he told me that such was his own experience. If there are any persons who now have that impression I would like to disillusion their minds of that idea. My dearest and best friends are West Pointers, and many of high rank.

Henley wrote an official report of the Sappa Creek fight, in which he said:

"My plan for the attack had been arranged as follows: Sergeant Kitchen was detailed with ten men to surround

the herd of ponies, kill the herders, round up the ponies as near to the main command as possible, stay in charge of them with half his men and send the rest to join me. Corporal Sharples, with five men, was left with the wagon, with instructions to keep as near me as the very rugged and broken nature of the country would permit—always occupying high ground. With the rest of my command I intended to intrude myself between the Indians and their herd, and attack them if they did not surrender.

“The north fork of Sappa Creek at this point is exceedingly crooked; is bordered by high and precipitous bluffs, and flows sluggishly through a marshy bottom, making it difficult to reach and almost impossible to cross.

“As we charged down the side of the bluff, I could see ten or twelve Indians running rapidly up the bluff to a small herd of ponies. Others escaped down the creek to another herd, while the remainder, the last to be awakened, probably, seeing they could not escape, prepared for a desperate defense. By this time I had reached the creek, which looked alarmingly deep and marshy. Knowing that no time was to be lost in hunting a crossing, I plunged in with my horse, Mr. Wheeler, the post trader at Wallace, who was acting as my guide, being with me. By extraordinary efforts our horses floundered through. A corporal who followed, became mired, but by desperate efforts all managed to cross just as a number of dusky figures, with long rifles, confronted us, their heads appearing over a peculiarly shaped bank.

“Some of the Indians took refuge in holes they had dug; others lined the bank, with their rifles resting on the crest. I formed my men rapidly into line and motioned the Indians to come in, as did Mr. Wheeler, who was on my left and a few feet in advance. One Indian, who appeared to be a chief, made some rapid gesticulations, which I at first thought was for a parley, but soon discovered it was directed to his own people, who were in the rear. I gave the com-



mand to fight on foot, which was obeyed with extraordinary promptness. As the men dismounted, the Indians fired excitedly, and fortunately no one was hit. I then ordered my men to fire, and posted them around the crest of the creek bank in skirmish line.

"Here Sergeant Theodore Rapier and Private Robert Themis, Company H, 6th Cavalry, were instantly killed while fighting with extraordinary courage. They did not appear to be more than fifteen or twenty feet from the Indians when they fell. After firing for about twenty minutes, and the Indians having ceased firing, I withdrew my men and their horses for the purpose of pursuing the Indians who had escaped. Hardly had we mounted when two Indians ran up to the two bodies which had been carried some distance up the ridge. I immediately detached three or four men at a gallop to charge them, and the Indians retreated, accomplishing nothing. Just then an Indian gaudily decked, jumped from a hole and with peculiar sidelong steps, attempted to escape, which he failed to do.

"I then posted my men at the two ends of the crest, avoiding the center, and opened fire again, the Indians returning the fire without any damage for some time, when the firing again ceased, and I concluded all were dead. Seeing a herd of ponies on a hill behind me, I sent two men to bring them in. A number of Indians tried to cut off the men. I mounted and went to the assistance of the men, driving the Indians off and bringing in the herd. Coming back to burn the camp, a solitary shot was fired from one of the pits, killing the horse of Trumpeter Dawson. I concluded to make a sure finish, and ordered Corporal Morris, with a detachment, to advance to the edge of the crest, keeping up a continual fire so that the Indians would not dare to show themselves above the crest. Another detachment went to the left and rear, and all advanced together. Some few shots were fired from the holes without any damage.

Nearly all the Indians by this time were dead. Occasionally a wounded Indian would thrust the barrel of a rifle from one of the pits and fire, revealing himself and being instantly dispatched. I have not been able to discover the original object of these holes or pits, but judge they were made for the shelter of those Indians who had no lodges, and were deepened and enlarged during the fight.

"Nineteen dead warriors were counted. Eight squaws and children were unavoidably killed by shots intended for the warriors. From the war bonnets and rich ornaments I judged two were chiefs, and one, whose bonnet was surrounded by two horns, to be a medicine man. The Indians were nearly all armed with rifles and carbines, the Spencer carbine predominating. A number of muzzle-loading rifles and one Springfield breech loading musket, caliber 50, were found.

"Mr. Homer W. Wheeler, post trader at Fort Wallace, left his business and volunteered to accompany the detachment as a guide. His knowledge of the country and of Indian habits was of the utmost service. He risked his life to find the Indian camp—was the first to discover it in the morning—and, although not expected to take part in the fight, was always on the skirmish line, and showed the greatest courage and activity. The three hunters, Henry Campbell, Charles Schroeder and Samuel F. Scrack who, with Mr. Wheeler, found the camp, performed important services. They participated in a portion of the fight, and drove in the herd of ponies which otherwise would not have been captured. When these men turned back with me I promised them they would be suitably rewarded if they found the camp. I respectfully request that their services, as well as those of Mr. Wheeler, be substantially acknowledged.

"Very respectfully,


"AUSTIN HENELY,

2d Lt. 6th Cavalry."

OFFICIAL COPY;  
Robt. Williams,  
Adjutant General.

## CHAPTER XXX

### A LITTLE INDIAN SCARE

 JOINED my troop at Fort Lyon, Colorado, in December, 1875, and performed the duties incident to that time. After the Custer massacre, June 25, 1876, my troop (L) and Troop H, Fifth Cavalry, were ordered sent to the old Red Cloud agency (now Fort Robinson), Nebraska. We remained there but a few days, when we were ordered to march to Camp Sheridan (Spotted Tail agency). It having been reported by courier that the camp was surrounded by Indians, and that the commanding officer, Captain Mears, 9th Infantry, would like to have more troops, we made a rapid march, covering the distance (50 miles) in about eight hours. We found the garrison (two companies) prepared to make a gallant defense. They had piled cord wood around the post—quite a common mode of defense in those days—as it made a good breastwork in case of an attack. We remained there only a short time and then returned to Fort Robinson.

It was at Camp Sheridan that I first met Gen. Jesse M. Lee, then a first lieutenant of the Ninth Infantry. General Lee is yet living, having resided in Los Angeles, California, for many years, and we have always been great friends. We were both very much interested in the welfare of the red man, and worked together on several occasions in the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). He was the Indian agent at Spotted Tail agency, and had great influence over those Indians. It was generally conceded at the time of the 1876 Indian troubles that he kept those Indians from joining the hostiles.

On the occasion of the trip to Red Cloud agency, I had charge of the wagon train. There were six wagons, each

drawn by six mules. With me were two non-commissioned officers, who had charge of the troop kitchen, the cooks, and three or four men—about nine in all.

On the way, while passing over a culvert, it broke down, and I had to repair it before I could get all my wagons over. This delayed me for a short time, allowing the column to get some distance ahead. While working on the bridge I noticed half a dozen horsemen coming toward me, and I soon discovered that they were Indians. We had passed through the agency some little time before, and I conjectured that they might have come out for some deviltry, and made up my mind if they had, they would not catch me napping.

It did not take me very long to repair the bridge, and we then continued our march. The Indians continued to come in from different directions, stopping in little groups on the prominent high ground around me. I asked a couple of the teamsters, who had been in my employ while in Kansas, and had been out on Indian scouting parties, what they thought about it. They replied that it looked a little bit suspicious, so I called the non-commissioned officers and told them what I had planned to do.

I sent one of them, with my compliments, to the commanding officer, that I had been delayed; that there were a number of Indians hovering around, and that, while there might be no danger of attack, I did not like the looks of things; their actions were suspicious, and I did not want to take any chances. I then called the corporal's attention to a ravine ahead, through which the road passed, and instructed him to be careful in approaching it, as there might be Indians lurking there, and that if he saw anything which did not look right, not to attempt to cross the gulch, but hasten back to the wagons.

I at once made preparations to corral my wagons on a little eminence near the ravine, which commanded the sur-

rounding country, and was a good position from which to stand off the Indians if they made an attack. There were about a dozen Indians on the hill, and I told Sergeant Clark of my troop to take three or four men and run them off. He started off, I following him as fast as the mules could go, but it was slow progress as the wagons were heavily loaded. The sergeant ran off the Indians, and leaving his men to occupy the hill, hastened back, laughing, and informed me that the Indians were some young bucks and squaws. I felt rather foolish over the scare, but one cannot always tell what an Indian may do. It developed—which I did not know at the time—that the young people of the tribe care for the ponies, and early in the morning drive them out to the grazing grounds. They no doubt had been doing this, and on their return to the village had stopped in groups and were gossiping and watching us out of curiosity.

I did not complete the corralling of my wagons, but straightened them out and moved on. My courier reached the commanding officer safely and delivered my message. Thereupon, Captain Hamilton, commanding H Troop, came to my "rescue." One of my men said to me, "Lieutenant, we had a pretty close call, didn't we?"

For my own part I would just as soon be killed as frightened to death. I think there is more truth than poetry in that expression.



## CHAPTER XXXI

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### CAPTURE OF RED CLOUD'S AND RED LEAF'S CAMPS



ON October 23, 1876, I was engaged in the affair on Chadron Creek, about forty miles from Red Cloud agency, where the villages of Red Cloud and Red Leaf were located. It was thought they were communicating with the hostiles, and that some of their young men had joined them. It was also feared they might break out into hostilities. They had been ordered by the agent to move in close to the agency, but failed to comply with the order, and General Crook ordered General Mackenzie to bring them in.

We left the post just after dark (when everything had quieted down) with six troops of the Fourth Cavalry and my troop (L) and H Troop, Fifth Cavalry, avoiding the agency, so the Indians would not see us, as they might notify Red Cloud that we were coming. The men were cautioned not to light matches or indulge in loud conversation. After we were well under way, Major Frank North joined us with his famous Pawnee Scouts. Along toward morning we came to a point where the trail forked, one branch leading to Red Cloud's camp, and the other to Red Leaf's.

General Mackenzie, with five troops of his regiment, and Major North and some of his scouts, set out for Red Cloud's camp, reaching there before daylight, and surrounding the village. At break of day the Indians were notified that they must surrender, whereupon the women and children made for the brush to hide themselves, but were driven back. The men remained in camp, but their arms were promptly taken away from them, making resistance futile. No doubt they had cached their best guns, for they had been ordered to turn them in some time before, and the arms

taken were useless. The women were told to go to the pony herd and select a sufficient number on which to pack their camp equipage.

General Mackenzie had some trouble in making the squaws take down their lodges, but they were told that if they did not get to work he would burn them. The women, however, did nothing, and the soldiers commenced to fire the tepees, whereupon the squaws swiftly set to work.

Red Leaf's camp was captured in about the same manner as Red Cloud's, by Major Gordon of the Fifth Cavalry, and M Troop of the Fourth, and a few scouts under Luther North, brother of Major North. The only shot fired was by accident. I was very much afraid that the shot might make trouble. We captured 400 ponies. My cattle experience came in good play. On rounding up the village, we joined General Mackenzie's column. The captive warriors numbered about 150, and there were about 700 ponies captured altogether. The women and children were not counted. The Indians claimed there were only 120 men and about 300 ponies captured.\* They may have been right as regards the number of men captured, but were mistaken as to the number of animals. My squadron was detailed to escort the captives to Camp Robinson, and the other troops went into camp.

We left Robinson about 9 o'clock p. m., and returned the next night about 11 o'clock, being absent from the post about twenty-five hours, a good part of which was in the saddle. Taking into consideration the rounding up of the Indian ponies, our squadron must have ridden more than one hundred miles—not a bad day's work.

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\*The Record of Engagements says 400 men and 700 horses.

## CHAPTER XXXII

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### OUT ON A SIDE SCOUT



**S**HORTLY after the capture of the Red Cloud and Red Leaf camps, a trail was discovered leading away from the agency. It was surmised that a small party may have gone out to join the hostiles. My captain, Alfred B. Taylor, was ordered to take his troop (L) and investigate this trail, to ascertain where it was leading, but was directed that, under no conditions, should he go beyond Hat Creek. If the trail led to this stream and crossed it, it was pretty good evidence that the party was on its way to join Sitting Bull. The trail might have been made by a party from the hostiles which had slipped into Red Cloud reservation for information and supplies, and then out again. It was well known that the Indians were having intercourse with each other, but the authorities had never been able to detect any of them.

Just before we moved out, our surgeon (a contract doctor) who had joined us from Chicago, and had seen no service of any sort, came to me in civilian clothing and asked me to give him a saber. I inquired what he was going to do with it. He said that Lieutenant McKinney had told him he ought to have one, and to come to me for it. I realized that this was one of the lieutenant's jokes, so without even a smile, I told the surgeon that a revolver was better than a saber, and gave him one.

We discovered that the trail was a small one, there being evidently about half a dozen Indians in the party. We followed it rapidly, and in a few hours' ride found that it turned back toward the agency. By this time it was almost dark, and was raining a little, making it difficult to follow

the trail, and we abandoned it, bivouacking for the night. We were satisfied that the party had returned to the agency.

On arriving in camp I noticed that the doctor had lost his saddle blanket, and asked him what had become of it. He had not discovered his loss, remarking, "I must have lost it away back somewhere, as my saddle has been getting very hard for some time." The poor doctor was very tired, and well he might be, for he had not been on a horse in years. Furthermore, this was the longest ride he had ever taken. He was certainly "game."

When the drizzling rain set in, I suggested to my captain, who was not very strong, that the doctor and he sleep together, and I would give them my blanket—a heavy one which I had strapped to my saddle—to spread over them. This suggestion was acted upon, and after assisting them in preparing their bed, I rolled into my saddle blanket, with my saddle for a pillow, and went to sleep. During the night I heard the doctor and the captain talking. It seems that the doctor, in his sleep, was rubbing the captain's back. This awakened the latter, who asked what the doctor was trying to do, to which the latter replied that he was dreaming, and thought he was back in Chicago scratching his wife's back. Then, with a long sigh, he added, "And I wish I was there right now."

We put in a fairly good night, and returned to our camp in the morning.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

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### HORSE RACING IN THE CAVALRY



IN those days every troop of cavalry had a horse the men thought could run, and they were always willing to back their favorite with money. We had some exciting races, and as this was about the only amusement we had, we enjoyed them very much. When we raced with civilians, however, we usually found that our horses could run just fast enough to lose the race.

We had a horse in L Troop, ridden by Trumpeter Brandsome, which was supposed to be a world-beater. I arranged a race with one of the officers of the Third Cavalry, his troop belonging to the regular garrison. When the race came off, all the garrison were betting on this horse, of course, and those outside the post were placing their cash on mine. The race was for a stake of \$50, and the distance was four hundred yards. It was to come off just back of the post, where a track had been improvised for this particular race. General Mackenzie and Major Gordon were the judges. At the appointed time the whole command turned out to witness the race. There was a crowd of several hundred, including many Indians, who are very fond of racing their ponies.

The horses got off in good shape. They were neck and neck the first few yards, then the horses would alternately forge ahead. I had arrived at the conclusion that the Third Cavalry horse was the better of the two. Near the outcome he was a little ahead, and it appeared that he was a sure winner. Suddenly he flew the track, attempting to go to the stable, which was near by. The rider, in trying to keep the



animal on the track, pulled him just enough to allow my horse to pass.

The judges decided that the Fifth Cavalry horse had won the race, although the animals had not finished between the judges. The other party claimed that it was no race on that account, and demanded that it be run over. I claimed that it was a gentleman's race and that my horse was the winner. Evidently the judges thought the same in making their decision. Finally it was decided that the race should be run over on the following Sunday. Then the other party wanted to put on a new rider, and run the race over on another track. This I would not consent to. The judges decided that the race must come off under the same conditions as the first one.

A day or two later I went into the Officers' Club where there were quite a number of officers, and of course we had to talk about the coming race. One of them wanted to bet me \$200 that the Third Cavalry horse would win the race. I did not care to put up any more money, as I was convinced that the other horse was the better. After some discussion this officer remarked, "Wheeler, you are not a thoroughbred. If you were, you would take my bet. The idea of a race-horse man being afraid to bet on his own horse; I never heard of such a thing."

This nettled me somewhat, and I told him to put up his money. He asked me if his word was not as good as his money, and I replied, "No, money talks with me." I was basing my action on the thought that perhaps his horse might fly the track again, which was the reason I would not consent to having the race run on another track. Finally the money was put up, the officer having to borrow some to make up the amount.

Just before the race came off, I told my rider to keep on the track under any and all circumstances. The other horse again tried to bolt the track in about the same place as before, and headed for the stables. I had taken the gambler's chance and won!

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### CALL "TO ARMS" SOUNDED



WHILE at Robinson we built temporary quarters for the officers and men of our squadron, and stables for the horses. Each organization had a kitchen, mess hall and a store room. Details were sent into the woods to cut logs and haul them to the agency sawmill, where they were cut into lumber. For our quarters we erected huts that would accommodate twelve men. Each was fitted with two windows, single sash, with four panes of glass. We constructed fireplaces of rock and mud on the outside of each hut at the rear. By doing this the huts were more spacious on the inside. All the work was done by soldier labor, under the supervision of the officers, the only expense to the Government being for nails, strap-hinges for the doors, window sash and glass. They would have been very comfortable quarters for the winter, but we did not remain there to occupy them.

One night, along toward morning, we heard a terrible screeching just across the creek, where the Fourth Cavalry was encamped.

"To arms" was sounded and repeated by all the trumpeters in the different camps. As soon as the alarm was sounded, all the men, some 3000 or more, fell in on their company parade grounds, awaiting orders. I fell in with my troop, and presently Major Gordon, our squadron commander, asked me to join him. A few minutes later "recall" was sounded and everything quieted down.

Upon investigation we learned that a recruit who had just joined, had nightmare. He said he was dreaming that an Indian was going to scalp him. At any rate, the alarm call was a good object lesson, and the first, in fact, that we had had.

## CHAPTER XXXV

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### WINTER CAMPAIGN OF 1876-'77



ON November 1, 1876, the following named officers and troops under Gen. Ranald S. Mackenzie, colonel Fourth Cavalry, moved out of Fort Robinson, Nebraska, comprising 52 officers and 1500 men, to join the Powder River Expedition at Fort Laramie, Wyoming:

#### OFFICERS OF THE FOURTH CAVALRY:

Henry W. Lawton, First Lieutenant, Regimental Quartermaster\*

Joseph H. Dorst, Second Lieutenant, Regimental Adjutant\*\*

Captain Clarence B. Mauck, Troop B.

Chas. M. Callahan, First Lieutenant, Troop B.

J. W. Martin, Second Lieutenant, Troop B.

Wentz E. Miller, First Lieutenant, Attached to Troop.

Captain John Lee, Commanding Troop D.

Stanton A. Mason, Second Lieutenant, Troop D.

Frank L. Shoemaker, First Lieutenant, Troop E.

Henry H. Belles, Second Lieutenant, Troop E.

Captain Wert Davis, Troop F.

Captain Wm. C. Hemphill, Troop I.

J. Wesley Rosenquest, Second Lieutenant, Troop M.

John A. McKinney, First Lieutenant, Troop K.

Harrison G. Otis, Second Lieutenant, Troop K.

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\*Henry W. Lawton was a major-general during the Spanish-American war. He was killed in action at San Mateo, Manila Province, Dec. 19, 1900. He was a gallant officer.

\*\*Joseph H. Dorst retired as colonel of the 3d Cavalry. His many friends believed he should have been advanced to the grade of a general officer before his retirement. He died Jan. 11, 1916.

## OFFICERS OF THE THIRD CAVALRY

Henry W. Wessels, Captain, Troop H\*\*\*  
Chas. Hammond, Second Lieutenant, Troop H.  
Gerald Russell, Captain, Troop K.  
Oscar Elting, First Lieutenant, Troop K.  
George A. Dodd, Second Lieutenant, Troop K\*\*\*\*

## OFFICERS OF THE FIFTH CAVALRY

John M. Hamilton, Captain, Troop H.  
Edward W. Ward, First Lieutenant, Troop H.  
Edwin P. Andrus, Second Lieutenant, Troop H.  
Alfred B. Taylor, Captain, Troop G.  
Homer W. Wheeler, Second Lieutenant, Troop G.

## OFFICERS OF THE FOURTH ARTILLERY

Cushing, Taylor, Bloom, Jones, Campbell, Crozier, Frank  
G. Smith, Harry R. Andrews, Greenough and Howe.

## OFFICERS OF THE NINTH INFANTRY

Jordan, MacCaleb, Devin, Morris C. Foot, Pease, Baldwin, Rockefeller, Jesse Lee, Bowman.

## OFFICERS OF THE FOURTEENTH INFANTRY

Vanderslice, Murphy, Austin, Krause, Hasson, Kimball.

The scout officers were First Lieut. Philo Clark, 2d Cavalry, Second Lieut. Hayden Delaney, 9th Infantry, and First Sergeant James Turpin, Troop L, 5th Cavalry.

These scouts were the choice of the Arapahoes, Bannocks, Pawnees, Sioux and a few friendly Cheyennes. Some of the Arapahoe chiefs were Sharp Nose, Old Eagle, Six

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\*\*\*Henry W. Wessels, brigadier-general, retired April 23, 1904. He was an excellent soldier.

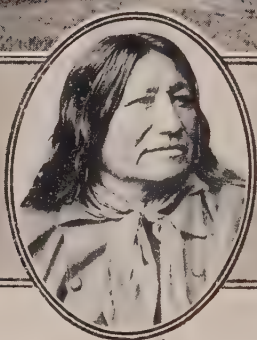
\*\*\*\*George A. Dodd, retired July 25, 1916, by operation of law. He was promoted brigadier-general prior to his retirement, for valuable services on the Mexican border.

(a) Edwin P. Andrus, retired colonel of cavalry, Dec. 31, 1912, at his request, after 40 years' service. He displayed courage and good judgment in the fight with Dull Knife's band of Cheyennes.

(I have mentioned only the officers who became generals and colonels. All the others did good service. Many of them served in the Civil War.)







Indian Women Erecting a Tepee.  
 Spotted Tail, a Brule Sioux Chief of Great Renown.  
 A Sioux Indian Village.

Feathers, Little Fork, White Horse, and William Friday, the interpreter.

Of the Cheyennes: Thunder Cloud, Bird, Blown Away, Old Crow, Fisher, Hard Robe.

Among the Sioux were Charging Bear, Pretty Voiced Bull, Yellow Shirt, Singing Bear, Tall Wild Cat, Black Mouse.

The original idea was to organize two companies of Indian scouts, Lieut. Philo Clark acting as major of scouts, and to command all. Had this plan been carried out, I was to command one of the companies.

The battalion and squadron commanders, as I remember, were Capt. J. B. Campbell, brevet major, 4th Artillery; Captain Jordan, brevet major, Ninth Infantry; Captain Krauss, 14th Infantry. There were four artillery companies, four companies of the Ninth Infantry and two of the 14th Infantry. Captain Mauck commanded five troops of the 4th Cavalry, and Major David Gordon of the 5th Cavalry commanded two troops of the Fifth, two of the Third, and Lieut. McKinney's troop of the Fourth.

On our arrival at Fort Laramie we found General Crook and his staff. First Lieut. John G. Bourke, 3d Cavalry, was acting assistant adjutant general, Walter S. Schuyler, first lieutenant Fifth Cavalry, and First Lieut. Philo Clark, 2d Cavalry, aides-de-camp. First Lieut. Charles Rockwell, 5th Cavalry, as commissary officer, Surgeon Joseph R. Gibson as chief medical officer.

Our command was increased on our arrival at Fort Laramie by Captain Egan's troops of the Second Cavalry. It was detailed at General Crook's headquarters. Four companies of the 9th and 23d Infantry, and two companies of Pawnee Scouts, numbering 65 men each, in charge of Frank North and his brother. These scouts gained quite a reputation in the Summit Springs fight, Nebraska, July 11th, 1869, when Gen. Eugene A. Carr defeated the dog soldiers under Tall Bull.

The regimental commanders were Cols. Richard I. Dodge and Townsend. We must have had at least 3000 men, including our Indian scouts. Some of our troops of cavalry were filled up to and over 100 men. Troop L had 118. These were new men known as "General Custer's Avengers." At least one-half our men were recruits, but very little drilled and with still less camp experience. However, it does not take long to break in new men where there are plenty of old non-commissioned officers and soldiers.

We remained at Fort Laramie three or four days fitting out the expedition. No finer, cleaner-cut expedition was ever known in our service. Each soldier was provided with heavy underclothing, fur cap, gloves, leggings and arctic overshoes. They were allowed two blankets each. "A" tents were supplied, to each of which four men were assigned, and the tents were pitched to face each other, allowing sufficient room between to place a Sibley stove and to pin the flaps of the tents together.

I wore a suit of heavy underwear; over that a suit of perforated buckskin, a blouse and cardigan jacket; leggings and moccasins (made by the Indians with the hair inside), a soldier's overcoat very heavily lined with overcoat material, with fur collar and wristlets, a sealskin cap and gloves. Such was the officers' apparel. The great drawback to wearing all this extra clothing was that we had to walk a great deal, which warmed us considerably, and we would get chilled when we mounted again.

The men took turns in keeping up the fires, and when wood was scarce they would gather buffalo chips and sagebrush for fuel. On this expedition I saw stacks of sagebrush and greasewood piled up that was much larger than two tents, and even this amount would not last very long, as it burned quickly. As soon as the tents were up, the men who had no other duty to perform, would begin to make preparations for comfort during the night. They would

go out and pull up grass and sagebrush, then spread their blankets on this and have a "bed of roses," so to speak.

When we moved out of Fort Laramie, each troop of cavalry had three six-mule teams, and each company of infantry, two. We had 168 wagons, which required about 190 wagon masters and drivers. We also had seven ambulances. Lieutenant Lawton, then first lieutenant of the Fourth Cavalry, was the quartermaster of the mounted troops, and Major John V. Furey, quartermaster of the expedition. In addition, we had 400 pack-mules under Tom Moore, chief packer. Some of the noted pack-masters with us were Delaney, Patrick and Dailey, Dave Mears, Young and others.

After five marches we reached Fetterman, 100 miles away, drew supplies and moved on to Cantonment Reno at the crossing of Powder river, distant about 100 miles further, and some four or five days' march. Part of the time we were marching in the teeth of a biting storm, and had some trouble in fording Powder river, because of the running ice.

At the Cantonment, Tom Cosgrove, with 100 Shoshone scouts from Fort Washakie, joined us. Lieutenant Schuyler, Fifth Cavalry, who was an aide on General Crook's staff, was put in command of them. The noted chief, Washakie, of the Shoshones, was not with his Indians. He sent word that he was suffering from rheumatism, and did not like to run the risk of a winter campaign, but had sent two sons and a nephew, and would come in person later on, if his services were needed.

Cantonment Reno had been established for the protection of supplies to be issued to expeditions like ours. The officers and men stationed there were living in dugouts. The commanding officer was Major Tom Pollock, 9th Infantry.

While at Reno quite a number of miners from Montana came in. They were almost starved, and had suffered considerably in the blizzard.



We remained at Reno only long enough to allow the storm to subside, and on Wednesday, November 22, 1876, we continued our march to Crazy Woman's Fork, a branch of Powder river, about twenty miles from Cantonment Reno.

It was General Crook's intention to push out from Crazy Woman's Fork and strike the camp of the great Sioux chief, Crazy Horse, at that time believed to be on the upper Rosebud river, Montana, near his old battlefield of the previous June. The plan was changed, however, by a trifling circumstance. Early on the morning of November 23d, a Cheyenne Indian known as Sitting Bear, who had been dispatched from Red Cloud agency by Col. J. W. Mason in advance of the expedition, to bear an ultimatum to the hostiles and ask them to surrender without bloodshed, gave General Crook the important information that the capture of a young Cheyenne warrior had alarmed his people, and that they had started across the hills to join Crazy Horse. There was, however, so he understood, another large Cheyenne village in one of the deep canyons of the Big Horn range, near the source of the Crazy Woman—the very stream we were on. So to discover the location of this village, to surprise and destroy it, became the order of the day.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

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### MACKENZIE'S FIGHT WITH DULL KNIFE'S BAND



GENERAL MACKENZIE was ordered to take all the scouts and cavalry, except Troop K, Second Cavalry, and push up the Crazy Woman Fork to its head, then strike into the Big Horn mountains and hunt for what fate might have in store for him. Ten days' rations and extra ammunition were packed on the mules, and to each man was issued 100 rounds of ammunition to be carried on the person. Our effective force was 28 officers and 790 men, and about 200 scouts. We left early on the morning of November 24, 1876.

About 3 p. m., on the third day's march, we were halted, ordered to unsaddle, feed and make coffee. That morning I had been detailed to take charge of the guard over the pack-train, which was a usual detail of twenty-four hours; but I was relieved by another officer when we bivouacked, and ordered to join my troop. At that time I did not understand why.

At this time I saw several Indian scouts riding their ponies as fast as they could make them go. I asked Frank Grouard, the chief scout, the reason for this. He told me it was an old Indian custom to do this before going into a fight, as it gave the ponies their second wind. Grouard further stated that some scouts had come in reporting that an Indian village had been located some distance away, and that the command would move on it as soon as the sun went down.

This we did, marching all night, surprising the village at the head of Willow Creek, a tributary of the Powder river, at daylight on the 25th. A short time before reaching

the village, I dismounted to remove my overcoat. In doing this, I broke the strap of my field glasses and stooped down to pick them up, when greatly to my surprise, I saw another pair of glasses lying at my feet! I hurriedly rolled up both pairs in my overcoat and strapped it to my saddle, but as my horse was very restless, I could not fasten my coat securely, and lost both pairs of glasses. I made every effort to learn if anyone in the command had lost any field glasses, but no one had. I think that some Indian must have dropped them, and that they had belonged to some officer of the Seventh Cavalry, for later, in the Indian village, we found a great many articles which belonged to that regiment, showing that these Indians must have taken an active part in the Custer battle of June 25th.

When we arrived in the vicinity of the Indian village, H and L troops of the Fifth Cavalry were ordered to charge through it. Lieutenant McKinney's troop was to support us, but instead of doing as he was ordered, he went in with us and was killed, his troop being fired on from a ravine directly in its front. The lieutenant was struck by six balls, his first sergeant was seriously wounded in the head, and six troopers were wounded. McKinney's troop retreated, breaking through H troop, cutting off three or four sets of fours, and the captain, Hamilton. The horse of Lieutenant McKinney's trumpeter was shot under him, falling on top of its rider, who could only partially disengage himself for the horse was lying on its rider's leg. However, the man managed to turn into such a position that he was able to open fire upon the Indians, and helped drive them away.

Several Indians came out of a ravine to rob the dead and wounded, but Captain Hamilton gallantly drove them back, sabering one or two. This act was never mentioned in the reports of the fight, yet it was well known that he did it. Had an act of this kind been performed during the Spanish-

American War, Hamilton would have been made a brigadier-general and given a medal of honor.\*

Here was the heaviest part of the fighting. Hamilton remained here, and L Troop, commanded by Capt. Alfred Taylor, continued to charge through the village. Hamilton, with the aid of Major Davis, drove the Indians out of their strong position, twenty of the Cheyennes being killed, and eight of their number falling into our hands.

After the enemy were driven out of the village, I saw a dozen Indians trying to run off about fifty ponies. Some of the savages were on foot. I called for volunteers, and Sergeant John Nicholson, Trumpeter Brandsome and Farrier Miller came out, and we charged them, driving the Indians off and recovering the ponies. Nicholson's horse was shot through the leg and had to be killed. Miller's horse also was wounded. All we ever got out of it was the information from my captain that to call for volunteers was not the proper thing to do, and that men should have been detailed for that sort of work. The Indians we charged while recapturing the ponies, went up a gulch, which, I am quite sure, was the ravine from which McKinney was fired upon.

Troop L, having charged through the village and driven out the last lurking sharpshooter, we dismounted and occupied a small fringe of timber just beyond the camp. Shortly after, Captains Hamilton and Davis came in on our left. In this fringe of timber, Private McFarland, an old soldier who had recently joined L Troop, received his death wound, being shot through the left lung. He was only a few feet from me at the time. He was a gallant soldier and had served during the Civil War.

My attention was called by Sergeant Divine to an object lying in a little depression in the ground about 200 yards in front of us. I was quite sure it was an Indian, and told

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\*Capt. Hamilton was killed at the battle of San Juan Hill, Cuba, July 1, 1898. He was then lieutenant-colonel of First Cavalry.

some of the men to fire at him. A Pawnee scout who happened to be with us, cried out, "Pawnee! Pawnee!" and firing ceased. It seems the Indian was recognized from the way he wore his hair. He had been unhorsed and was lying low between the two fires. He must have borne a charmed life.

A number of Cheyennes rode out under fire, hurled their contempt and defiance at us, and then returned to cover. There was one daring warrior who seemed to take great delight in exposing himself to our fire. He was riding a fine horse, and bore on his left arm a shield of buffalo hide, and upon his head a beautiful war bonnet, the tail of which swept the ground. Bullets struck all around him. I borrowed a carbine from one of my men and fired several shots at him, but my "carefully-aimed" shots did not seem to bother him any more than the hundreds of other bullets flying all around him. He remained too long under fire, however, and finally went over, pony and all. Immediately after he fell, a warrior decorated with a profusion of feathers, mounted upon a spirited pony, and bearing also upon his left arm an elaborate shield made of buffalo hide hardened in the fire, charged recklessly into the face of death, chanting loudly the war song. On he came, dismounted, and bent over the body of his friend, lifted it, placed it across the withers of his pony, sprang into the saddle and turned back to ride into their lines. At one time it looked as though he would reach his goal in safety, and I think all those who were witnessing the daring feat were wishing he might escape the hundreds of flying bullets; but evidently his "medicine" was bad, as he finally toppled off his horse, which also dropped under the fire of our men. This incident was the first of the kind I had ever witnessed, but it is a well known fact that such daring acts have been performed numerous times by the Cheyennes and Sioux.

During a lull in the fight, Bill Rowland, one of our interpreters, who had married into the Cheyenne tribe,



crawled up, with some of our Cheyenne scouts, close to the enemy's position, and began a parley; but the hostiles were not inclined to participate therein. However, enough of a conversation was had to let us know that Dull Knife had with him Roman Nose, Gray Head, Turkey Legs and Little Wolf, who were the chiefs in command; in fact, the former, with two companions, approached near enough to Rowland to let him know that he (Dull Knife) had lost three sons in the fight, and personally, was willing to surrender, but was unable to influence the other chiefs who were in the village.

These Indians called out to our Indian scouts, "Go home! You have no business here! We can whip the white soldiers alone, but can't fight you, too." General Mackenzie very wisely did not attempt to force them out of their improvised rifle pits or from behind the rocks on the hillside. Had he done so, our loss of life would have been fearful.

To make sure of what we had gained, the general moved off all the herd of ponies and ordered the village to be totally destroyed. He sent back to General Crook for the infantry with a view to having them bring their more powerful rifles to bear on the hostiles, in case they did not withdraw to another position. At that time the carbine used by the cavalry was not as powerful as the rifles of the infantry, but today both use the same arm. I, for one, was glad the hostiles decided to withdraw.

I was now ordered by General Mackenzie to collect a number of men, take a position near the hospital hill and remain there until further orders. Lieutenants Lawton and Dorst told me it was the general's intention to have me make a charge on a certain position. In carrying out my instructions I crossed quite a wide plain, instead of going around it, as I should have done, but I thought I would take the risk. I started across it at a walk, but two or three bullets whistled past me. As they commenced coming faster, I in-



creased my gait, so that very soon I was lying low on my horse and giving him the spurs vigorously. He was slightly wounded.

A trooper named Kline had his horse shot under him. I heard the bullet when it struck the horse, which swayed back and forth several times and then dropped dead. Kline commenced to remove the saddle and bridle, but I told him to hurry up and get out of there, or he, too, would be shot. He answered, "Lieutenant, I don't want to have to pay for this saddle and bridle." It is needless to say he did not have to.

An incident worth relating shows that Indian scouts were valuable allies, and could be depended upon. The wounded were behind a hill known as the "hospital hill." From some rocks, a little way up the mountain side, the hostiles were firing upon them, and on a number of lead horses, making it very uncomfortable. General Mackenzie asked Major Frank North, in my presence, at the hospital hill, if he thought he could drive the Indians away from there. North replied that he thought so, if there were only a few of them. He blew a call on his Indian whistle, which sounded to me very much like a turkey call used by hunters. In a short time half a dozen Pawnees, with a non-commissioned officer, appeared. When told what they were to do, they stripped down to their "gee strings," removing their heavy boots and substituting moccasins (they were wearing uniforms) and then, tying handkerchiefs around their heads, so they might not be taken for hostiles, they quickly disappeared up the mountain-side. The firing soon ceased. I was later informed that the scouts had killed one or two of the hostiles and scalped them.

After the fight was over, my troop was detailed for guard, and I as officer of the guard. I had just established an outpost on a prominent position overlooking the field of battle, when an orderly notified me that the general wished

me to report to him at once. The position where I had located the outpost was on the same hill which Lieut. Walter Schuyler, with his Shoshone scouts, had occupied early in the morning in driving off the hostiles. This was an important position overlooking part of the village, and the Indians were compelled to abandon it because of the very heavy firing from Schuyler's scouts. He was commended for the active part he took in the fight, and was recommended for brevet. Finally, however, he received his appointment as brigadier-general, and is now retired.

On reporting to the general, he ordered me at once to make preparations to move the dead and wounded to our camp on Powder river, more than a hundred miles away. I asked the general for twenty men and as many packers as he could spare, saying that I would let him know later how many men I needed with the travois train.

The men and four packers reported to me, and I sent them out to gather up all the travois and tepee poles they could find, as well as any other material that could be used. This was no easy task, as the 175 lodges of the village were on fire and nearly destroyed. Nevertheless, they brought twenty or thirty travois, a few tepee poles and a few buffalo robes. All the travois had to be straightened and new ones made, which required a great deal of labor. One officer and six privates had been killed, and 26 enlisted men wounded. Two of the dead were buried on the field. We needed thirty litters, as three of the men had fallen sick and could not ride their horses, and as we were short of material, decided to carry four of the bodies on mules. My men had very little sleep that night, but in the morning were ready to move out with the command. We built large fires to make the wounded comfortable and to give us light to work by, and as fast as the litters were completed, we placed the wounded on them in two lines, facing each other. The fires were kept burning all night between the lines. We were

able to put the travois in any inclined position, so the men were very comfortable and I never saw a more cheerful lot.

We worked all night and moved out in the morning. While preparing to start, General Mackenzie came around to see how we were getting along. He called my attention to some travois which the men were holding in position, waiting for the packers to attach the mules. I explained to him that I had only four packers; that it took two for each travois; that the soldiers did not know how to hitch the mules to them properly, and that if I had a sufficient number of packers, I could hitch them all up at once. The general rode away, saying to one of his aides, "I think I had better let Wheeler alone; he seems to know what he is about."

This incident was related to me by Lieutenant (afterward major-general) H. W. Lawton, regimental quartermaster Fourth Cavalry, a day or so after the affair.

I asked for a personal detail of 128 men and eight non-commissioned officers. I assigned two men to each mule that carried the bodies and four men to each travois—one to lead the mule, two to dismount and ease the travois over rough places, and the fourth to hold their horses. One non-commissioned officer looked after every five travois and two non-commissioned officers assisted me. On reaching a bad place, two men would dismount and lift the travois over it, so that the occupant would not get jolted. These two men would remain at this point until the entire travois-train had passed it, then they would hasten back to their original position. At the next bad place the men with the litter following would do the same thing, and so on throughout. Great care had to be exercised that the dead should not be disfigured by a mule running away or brushing against objects which might break a leg or arm. In fording a stream, the packers dismounted, two on each bank. The rear of the litters would be handed by two of the packers to two mounted men to be supported while crossing, and then low-

ered by the packers on the opposite side of the stream. These men would remain there until the entire train had forded the stream.

Only one accident occurred. At the crossing of one stream a litter was dropped, but the mule passed along so quickly that the occupant did not get very wet.

General Mackenzie had told me that I probably would be unable to keep up with the column, and should take my time, and that he would leave two troops of the Third Cavalry as guard. To the astonishment of the whole command, we kept right up with the column. The advice and suggestions I received from Colonel Tom Moore, the chief packer, and a veteran at packing, were of great assistance to me in the organization and handling of the travois, and the packers who assisted me were excellent men.

At one point the train wound around the mountain side and the trail was so narrow in some places that we could not pass over it without jeopardizing the lives of the wounded and the mules. If, by some accident, one of the travois were to go over the embankment, it would drop several hundred feet. We were therefore obliged to find a place where we could lower the litters down the mountain side, or carry our men over the bad places. As we had no stretchers, it would have taken some time, and would have been a hardship on the poor fellows to carry them, and we soon found a place where we could lower the travois by means of our lariats tied together, making a line nearly 200 feet long. We attached two of these lines to a travois, so they could be lowered safely. The men and mules were on hand below to receive them, and the lines were soon disengaged and drawn back. In the meantime another travois had been made ready for the descent. As they arrived at the station, the packers attached the mules to the travois, and by the time the last litter had come down, the train was ready to move on. One of the wounded said the slide was equal to a tobog-



gan ride. All were lowered without accident in a remarkably short time.

During the march several amusing incidents occurred. While we were passing through what was known by the Indians as "Race Horse Canyon," a travois had fallen out for repairs. I looked back to see if it was coming, and saw it approaching as fast as a mule could run. I hastened back to reprimand the corporal in charge for such gross carelessness, and as I began to upbraid him in emphatic language, the wounded man cried out: "Let her go, lieutenant. If I had sleigh bells I'd think I was taking a sleigh ride." This man was Private Holsom of H Troop, Fifth Cavalry, who was very badly wounded in the hip. The great comfort of a travois is due to the inclined position in which the patient is carried, as there is little or no jolting. They are much more comfortable than an ambulance.

A Shoshone Indian—one of our scouts named Amzi—was shot through the intestines and brought into the hospital about dark. We also had a private named McFarland who had been shot through the lungs. The surgeon said that neither of them could live. We placed them in the only tent with the command, which General Mackenzie had kindly sent over to us. The surgeon had told me that these men would require some stimulants, and left a bottle of brandy, with instructions to give them a drink occasionally if they were suffering. I gave them each a drink at once (not forgetting to take one myself). After a while Amzi called out, "Oh, John." (It was customary for Indians to call all white men "John.")

I went over to see what Amzi wanted. He grunted "Oh, John, heap sick! wickiup overhead—whisky!"

I thereupon gave Amzi another drink. On two or three other occasions during the night he repeated his request, and I would give him a drink. The next morning Amzi was missing, and I learned that he had got on his horse and gone



to his Indian friends, the other scouts! On the second day after we started back, he came to me, with a couple of his friends, who were supporting him on his horse, and said he could ride no further. As Private McFarland was just at the point of death, I stopped the travois until he had ceased to breathe. I then gave Amzi the travois and strapped poor McFarland's body on a mule. One of McFarland's friends who belonged to his troop, and had been taking care of him, pleaded with me not to put his dead bunkie on the mule; but I told the man that Amzi was one of our scouts, and wounded, therefore I was obliged to take care of him as well as I could, and that even if Amzi had been a hostile, it would be my duty to care for him. McFarland died on the 28th of November, and on the same day we had to face another rather stiff snowstorm.

We arrived safely at the field hospital, where we left the infantry command and turned the wounded over to the surgeon. Next morning I went over to the hospital to see how the wounded were getting on, and as I entered the hospital tent, I heard once more, in familiar tones:

"Oh, John! Heap sick! Whisky!"

Looking over in the corner, whom should I espy but Amzi! I went over to him and explained that I had nothing more to do with his case now, as I had turned him over to the hospital authorities, and was unable to give him any more whisky. He was much disappointed. He made me understand that he was cold, and wanted to be moved nearer the camp stove. I spoke to the surgeon in charge, who had him removed there.

We continued our march for a day or two and arrived at Cantonment Reno. Amzi remained in the hospital for two or three weeks, then got on his horse and rode over to Fort Washakie agency, about 200 miles distant! His rather miraculous recovery may be explained, in part, to the fact, that he had not eaten anything for nearly twenty-four hours

prior to the time he was wounded, and his intestines were thus empty, which greatly facilitated his recovery. About two years later I was at Fort Washakie and made inquiry about Amzi. I learned that, thinking perhaps he bore a charmed life, he had gone over to steal horses from the Crows and was killed.

One of the men of my troop, named Wildie, was detailed as orderly for Major Gordon. He was leading the pack-mule belonging to the squadron headquarters, and was not supposed to go into the engagement. However, he turned the mule loose, pack and all, and went into the fight. During the engagement he exposed himself unnecessarily to the fire of the enemy while greatly excited. His captain told him several times to lie down or he would get shot. He remarked that no redskin bullet could hit him. No sooner were the words out of his mouth than a ball struck him. As he fell he exclaimed: "Yes, they can, too, captain; give 'em hell!" As soon as he discovered that the wound was not serious, he went to shooting again.

Lieutenant Kimball of the 4th Infantry, tells the following story on me. It may or may not be true. He said that when I met him, just after the fight, he was eating a big chunk of the captured dried buffalo meat, and that I said to him, "Man, what on earth are you doing? That meat may be poisoned—throw it away!" He hastily did so, whereupon I immediately got off my horse, picked it up, remounted and rode off eating the meat!

As stated, after the fight, we returned to Cantonment Reno. Next morning, Thanksgiving Day, we buried our dead—four in number. Two men of the 4th Cavalry were buried on the battlefield. Lieutenant McKinney's body was sent home to his people.

It was a beautiful winter's morning when the funeral occurred, and the ceremony was very impressive. The entire command turned out, headed by Generals Crook and

Mackenzie, Colonels Townsend, Dodge and Gordon, and the bodies were followed to the burial ground preceded by the trumpeters playing the funeral dirge. The grave was in a beautiful wooded valley where Fort Reno had been some years before. The four bodies were interred side by side; "taps" was sounded and the usual volleys were fired by the guard of honor. Rocks were piled on the grave to prevent the wolves digging up the bodies, and a great quantity of wood was placed on the stones and set on fire, obscuring the grave, so that the Indians might not locate it, for they would frequently dig up bodies and scalp them.

Dull Knife's village contained at least 1500 souls, and there must have been between four and five hundred fighting warriors. It was usually estimated that each lodge would average three men capable of bearing arms. Boys from 12 years of age and upward are considered capable of putting up a good fight. I have heard old Indian fighters say they would sooner fight men than boys; that Indian boys had no sense, did not know what fear was and would take greater chances. A boy was not given a name nor allowed in the councils until his courage had been thoroughly tested. Therefore, he was very anxious to become a warrior.

I once heard a man say—he was wounded on my ranch and at the point of death—that he did not care so much about dying, but regretted that he had been killed by a mere boy!

The destruction of the Cheyenne village was a terrible punishment to those Indians. It was no doubt the richest prize that ever fell into our hands. Two hundred and five lodges—mostly of canvas, issued by the Indian Department, and quite a number of buffalo robes and hides were destroyed. That alone should have been sufficient punishment without killing any of the Cheyennes. Every lodge was fully supplied with food for the winter. There must have been tons of dried buffalo meat, together with deer and elk

meat. There were hundreds of bladders and paunches of fat and marrow which had been preserved by the squaws. In addition there were cooking utensils, war-like trappings and horse equipments, quite a few of which had belonged to the Seventh Cavalry. These were all destroyed by fire. That these people had taken an active part in the Custer massacre was plainly evident. Some of the articles found in their lodges are herewith enumerated:

A pillow case made of a silk guidon of the 7th Cavalry; memorandum books of the first sergeants of the 7th Cavalry, one of which had an entry made the very day of the fight. It read: "Left Rosebud June 25th." It had the names of the men in the troop and of those who were for guard on the morning of the fight. This book had been used by a Cheyenne warrior to record the picture history of his own prowess. On one page he was lancing a mounted trooper wearing sergeant-major's chevrons. It is thought to have represented the killing of Sergeant-Major Kennedy, who was with Major Elliott in the battle of the Washita, Nov. 27, 1868. Elliott became separated from Custer and with fourteen of his men were surrounded and killed. On another page he was killing a soldier who was running away from Reno's barricade on the hill, amid a shower of bullets. On another page he was killing a teamster, and on another a poor miner.

There were cavalry horses branded "7th U. S. Cavalry"; a buckskin jacket, supposed, from certain marks to have belonged to Capt. Tom Custer; a pocketbook containing money (one found by Sharp Nose, an Arapahoe chief, containing not quite \$50); the hat of Sergt. William Albin, Troop I, Third Cavalry, killed in Crook's fight on the Rosebud, June 17th, and identified by the sergeant's name on the band; the scalps of two young girls, one white and the other Shoshone; a buckskin bag containing the right hands of twelve Shoshone babies; the hand and arm of a Shoshone squaw and a necklace of human fingers. This ghastly trophy of aboriginal religious art, the especial decoration of High Wolf, the chief medicine man of the Cheyennes, can be inspected at the National Museum, Washington, D. C., where it was deposited by Capt. John Bourke (deceased).

There were also found war bonnets of eagle feathers, shields, squaw robes of tanned antelope skin, ornamented



with bead work and dyed porcupine quills and elk teeth—marvels of aboriginal beauty—stone pipes, some inlaid with silver, tobacco bags, most elaborately ornamented with bead and quill work.

In my collection of Indian curios I had several articles which came out of this Cheyenne village.

The Indians had gone into winter quarters. There could not have been found a more ideal spot to camp for the winter. It was a stronghold in itself, well sheltered, abundance of timber, fine running water, and—last but not least—the country was alive with game—buffalo, elk and deer. The Indians doubtless thought they were perfectly safe from attack as they had no runners out to give them warning if there were any enemies in the country. \*

During the month of November we marched 380 miles.

#### EXTRACT FROM REGIMENTAL HISTORY FOURTH U. S. CAVALRY

On November 25, 1876, an expedition under Gen. Ranald S. Mackenzie, comprising B, D, E, F, I and M Troops, Fourth Cavalry, while scouting on the Powder river, came upon Dull Knife's band of Cheyennes. The commanding officer's report is as follows:

"About twelve o'clock M, on the 24th inst., while marching in a south-westerly direction toward the Sioux pass of the Big Horn mountains, I was met by five of the seven Indian scouts who had been sent out the evening before, who reported that they had discovered the main camp of the Cheyennes at a point in the mountains fifteen or twenty miles distant. The command was halted until near sunset, and then moved toward the village, in-

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\*This has been denied by the Indians themselves. However, they were not prepared to meet us. I think Gen. Mackenzie reported thirty killed. I saw a dozen or more bodies. It was said that twenty-five fell into our hands, and the Indians must have carried away some of their dead. The full loss was never known. When the Cheyennes returned to the Red Cloud agency, they admitted that forty were killed, but never stated the number of wounded. A few of the latter and some of the frost-bitten Indians were treated at the agency hospital. It was said that they killed some of their ponies, removed the entrails and placed their papooses inside the carcasses to keep them from freezing.

After our fight with Dull Knife, my captain, Alfred B. Taylor, was taken ill, which left me in command of the troop—"G", Fifth Cavalry.



tending to reach it at or before daylight. Owing to the nature of the country, which was very rough, and in some cases difficult to pass through with cavalry, the command did not reach the village until about half an hour after daylight. The surprise was, however, almost, if not complete. The village consisted of 205 lodges, and their entire contents were destroyed. About 500 ponies were taken and twenty-five Indians killed, whose bodies fell into our hands, and from reports, which I have no reason to doubt, I believe a much larger number were killed. Our loss was one officer and five men killed and twenty-five soldiers and one Shoshone Indian wounded. Lieut. McKinney, 4th Cavalry, who was killed in this affair, was one of the most gallant officers and honorable men that I have ever known."

### DOUBLE TROPHY ROSTER

I am indebted to Mr. Geo. Bird Grinnell of New York City, author of "The Fighting Cheyennes," for the following extracts from this roster written soon after 1905. The original was given me by First Sergeant James Turpin, Troop G, 5th Cavalry, who found it in Dull Knife's village the day of the fight. It was in my collection of Indian trophies when I disposed of them. I have since learned that it is now owned by Mr. J. J. White, Jr., of New York City.

### DOUBLE TROPHY ROSTER

PROPERTY OF J. J. WHITE, Jr., 52 BROADWAY, N. Y.

"This is a squad roster kept in 1876 by First Sergeant Brown of G Troop, 7th Cavalry, commanded by Lieut. Donald McIntosh. Such memorandum books were used only in the field.

"The roster appears to have been started April 19, 1876, at which time the troop was just leaving Louisiana—where it had been stationed since the autumn of 1874—for the regimental headquarters, Fort A. Lincoln, Dakota. The earlier entrances during April tell of the incidents of the journey from the south as far as St. Paul, Minn., where the company took the train for Bismarck, Dakota which was then the end of track of the N. P. R. R. The earlier pages of the book, to Page 12, inclusive, show the names of the men in the company, and the duty which they performed during the months of May and June. The black triangles under various dates in the square opposite a man's name, indicate that he was on duty, as "S" for stables, "p" for police, "D. D." for daily duty, etc. Lieut. McIntosh's name is mentioned on Page 65, where, under date of May 24, 1876, seven men are named as his fatigue detail. Mention is made in the book of the date at which the company left Ft. Lincoln to join Gen. Terry's expedition, and the lengths of two or three marches are given. The latest entry in the book reads: "McEgan lost his carbine on the march while on duty with pack train, June 24, 1876."

## MACKENZIE'S FIGHT WITH DULL KNIFE'S BAND 189

"On June 25, 1876, the Custer fight took place, in which Sergeant Brown was probably killed with Reno's command. Lieut. McIntosh also was killed, and his monument is to be seen in the valley of the Little Big Horn, not far from Crow Agency, Montana. His remains were afterward removed to Leavenworth, and the Crows now reap their grain close about the stone which marks the spot where he fell. This squad roster book was captured in the Custer fight by a Northern Cheyenne Indian named High Bull, who owned and kept it. He and his friends drew in it pictures of various notable events which happened to them.

"Knowing that the book had been in the possession of the Northern Cheyennes, in 1898, I requested Mr. White to permit me to take it out to these people in order to see what could be learned about it from them.

"I was fortunate enough to find among the Cheyennes, Old Bear, who had been an intimate friend of High Bull, and who, as I drew the book from my pocket and held it out to him, before he had taken it in his hand, said, 'Why, I know that book. I have seen it often. High Bull owned and kept it.' The identifications of the portraits in the book are all by Old Bear.

"On page 3 are pictures of two men, each of whom is talking to a woman. The men, of course, are recognized by the fact that they wear breech clouts and men's leggings, while the women wear women's leggings and their garter-strings show. The male figure toward the top of the page is High Bull himself. The figure below is Weazel Bear, who several times appears in this book. He was killed at the same time with High Bull in the Powder river fight in November, 1876, when Gen. Mackenzie charged down on Dull Knife's village, and this book was recaptured.

"The picture on Page 24, a mounted Indian with pistol and lance, charging a soldier, is White Elk. He died of sickness.

"On page 30 is seen Crazy Wolf counting 'coup' on a Shoshone whom he is about to scalp. This man appears again, and the style of his war bonnet should be noted, as well as the bird which he wears on his head, the bear's ear medicine over his shoulder and the decorations of his horses. The object in his left hand is a scalping knife. On pages 32 and 33 appears Crazy Wolf counting 'coup' on three white soldiers, infantrymen. It will be seen from the tracks that he rode up close to these soldiers and then jumped off his horse, ran up to them on foot and counted 'coup' with his gun on the tree. It is to be noted that on page 33 his horse wears a scalp on the bridle bit. On pages 34 and 35 are pictured ten other infantrymen, on whom Crazy Wolf appears to have counted 'coup.' Some of them seem to be dead and others living.

"Page 36 shows Weazel Bear, a close friend of High Bull, who has just killed a soldier with an arrow, and is now in the act of running down and counting 'coup' on another soldier. As stated, Weazel Bear was killed in Gen. Mackenzie's fight on Powder river.

"Page 38 shows Little Sun, now dead, counting 'coup' on two Shoshone Indians who were entrenched behind breastworks. He has stopped his horse, dismounted, thrown down the saber which he was carrying, and rushed up to the breastworks to strike his enemy with the lance.

"Page 40 shows High Bull, the owner of the book, being chased and shot at by Crow Indians. High Bull is armed with gun and lance, carries a shield and is whistling on his war whistle defiance to his enemies. The fight took place on Arrow Creek, which is called by white people, Pryor's Fork.

"Page 42 is thought to be Bear Black armed with bow and gun and chasing a soldier. He is whistling on his war whistle.

"Page 44 shows Weazel Bear counting 'coup' with a lance on a Shoshone Indian in a fight on Powder river.

"Page 46 is unidentified. It is evidently an Indian counting 'coup' on a wounded soldier in an ambulance, but nothing is known of the circumstances.

"Pages 50 and 51 show Owl's Foot, whose horse has been badly wounded in a fight with soldiers, and who is retreating. Owl's Foot is still alive.

"Page 53 is unidentified. It looks as if it might have been a charge up the hill against Reno's command.

"Pages 54 and 55 represent a fight with Snake Indians on the Powder river by the Northern Cheyennes. The Snakes were entrenched as seen. The figure on horseback is Old Bear, who drew the picture himself. The wounded man lying on the ground is Crazy Head. Both of these are yet alive and are well known to me.

"Pages 56 and 57 show Yellow Nose, a Ute Indian, captured when a little child by the Cheyennes and reared by them. He was one of the bravest warriors known in the Cheyenne tribe. He is no longer living. This picture probably shows an incident in the Custer fight. The soldiers are entrenched and were charged by a large body of Indians. It will be seen that Yellow Nose rode very close to the entrenchment, and then, his horse having been wounded, he jumped off and ran away on foot.

"Pages 58 and 59 also show Yellow Nose.

"Page 61 is unidentified. An Indian has ridden up close to an entrenched soldier and counted 'coup' on him with a lance.

"Pages 66 and 67 are unidentified. An Indian has counted 'coup' on three fallen soldiers. There are no further identifications.

"Crazy Wolf was a brother-in-law of the somewhat celebrated Black Coyote, and with him committed suicide in the jail at Miles City, Montana, about 1879.

"In November, 1876, when Gen. Mackenzie destroyed Dull Knife's village, High Bull was killed, and this book was recaptured by First Sergeant James H. Turpin, Troop L, 5th Cavalry. The fight took place November 25th, 1876. The memorandum book disappeared from the Cheyenne camp, not to be seen again by any of these people, until it was shown to them in October, 1898."

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### MORE SCOUTING EXPERIENCES



FOLLOWING the Dull Knife fight, we remained at Fort Reno a few days, drew supplies and then started out on another expedition into the Black Hills country. We had some very cold weather on the Belle Fourche, in which a few animals were frozen to death.

One of the mules insisted upon backing into the tent occupied by the surgeon, Marshal W. Wood, and myself, loosening the tent cords. I got up two or three times during the night, driving the mule away and tightening the cords. It was so cold that my nose and fingers were nipped by the frost. I wanted the doctor to get up once or twice to drive the mule away, but he would not do so. I told him the tent might come down on us, whereupon he replied, "Let her come!"

Shortly afterward it did come down, the mule falling over into it, frozen to death. He came within an ace of falling on the doctor, and from the state of my feelings at the time, I rather wished he had. The remainder of the night we put in very uncomfortably. It must have been over 40 degrees below zero, as the bulbs in our thermometers were frozen.

Sergeant Clark of my troop reported to me that it was impossible to hold the herd with the number of men he had, as the horses were backing into the tents and pushing them over, so that the men could not sleep, and he suggested that the guard be doubled. This was done and we lost no horses. On starting out the next morning nearly every organization had lost a few animals, so men were left behind to gather them up. During the march General Mackenzie came



up and asked me how many horses I had lost the night before. I told him none, and he inquired how that occurred. I told him that I had doubled my guard, and he remarked: "It's very strange that some of these older officers didn't think of that. Half of my horses are scattered over the prairie."

I didn't tell the general that Sergeant Clark should have received credit for saving the horses from straying, but ought to have done so.

The march across the Pumpkin Buttes on Christmas Day was one of the most disagreeable imaginable. A furious storm was raging. We had to walk and lead our horses to keep from freezing. Two of our thermometers indicated 26 degrees below zero, Fahrenheit. Neither of the instruments were of any service. Spirit thermometers in Deadwood registered that day 40 degrees below, and in Fort Sanders, Wyoming, 38 degrees. We were in direct longitude between the two points.

On New Year's Day, 1877, it was very cold, but no storm with it. We walked most of the day. I had a very unpleasant occurrence on that day. The night before I had gone into camp in a ravine. It was a mile at least from where the trail crossed the ravine. When I moved out the following morning—the snow nearly a foot in depth—instead of following down the canyon to the road, I started out leading my horse diagonally to the road, thereby saving nearly a mile of travel. When I reached the road, the command had not arrived. My position in the column was the third troop. In marching, each organization alternates daily. When there is a long column it makes quite a difference in time in getting into camp.

When the column came along, the officer commanding the troop where I should have taken my place, would not let me in. I sent a message to the officer in command. General Mackenzie did not happen to be at the head of the







"Comanche," the Horse Ridden by Capt. Miles Keogh in the Battle of the Little Big Horn, or "Custer's Last Fight,"  
June 25, 1876, and the Only Living Thing which Escaped after the Fight Began. Mounted and  
Owned by the Kansas State University Museum.

column, and this officer made me wait and fall in at the rear. I was very wroth about it, not only for myself, but for my men. I did not get into camp until after sundown. As we were going into camp, Lieutenant Andrus of H Troop, my regiment, and to whose mess I belonged, came out to look for me. He inquired what the trouble was. I told him, in very emphatic language, my grievance.

While we were talking, who should ride up alongside me but General Mackenzie! I was pretty frightened. The general remarked:

"Mr. Wheeler, when you have any grievance with your commanding officer you had better be more careful what language you use and when you use it."

He then continued: "Mr. Wheeler, I have a good place for your troop to go into camp—plenty of wood and water. You fall in in your regular place in the morning."

It was a wonder he did not place me under arrest. He had just placed two officers in arrest, and they had to march in the rear of their troops the next day. When I got my troop into camp and everything in shipshape order for the night, it was after dark. Before I could go to my dinner, everyone had finished eating, but my friend had the cook save me some dinner, and our good doctor, a member of the mess, had a small flask of brandy which he had been saving for emergency cases—and mine was one of them. He made me a hot brandy sling. My dinner was composed of desiccated potatoes, elk meat, bread, and for dessert, canned pears. It seemed to me at the time that it was the best meal I had ever eaten.

While on the Belle Fourche I was the officer of the guard, and had to visit the different sentinels and picket lines during the night. It was very cold when I made my rounds. I thought I would go on foot to save my horse, so started out. One of the squadrons was in camp quite a little distance down the river, which was frozen over, so I thought

I would walk on the ice. It was a dark night—no moon—and I walked into an airhole! Down I went into the water and mud up to my armpits! It did not take me very long to get out, but before I had completed my rounds, my clothing was frozen stiff. I found one sentinel who had slipped down and broken his carbine.

We were out a number of days, not discovering any fresh Indian signs, and therefore returned to Cantonment Reno. On the return a very sad accident happened. One of the 4th Cavalry troops was watering. They had led their horses down to the water, because of the abrupt banks of the stream. A horse belonging to one of the sergeants slipped on the ice, and falling on the sergeant, crushed the life out of him. He was a veteran of the Civil War, and could he have had his choice in the premises, would doubtless have preferred to die on the field of battle.

We were at Reno a few days, and then started for Fort Laramie, where the expedition was to be broken up, the troops going to their several garrisons.

While at Fort Fetterman another accident occurred. A member of the guard had placed his carbine in a wagon, and in taking it out, it was discharged. The bullet in its flight passed through the back of the clerk of H Troop, 5th Cavalry, killing him. He was sitting in a tent near by, making up the muster rolls. It was the old story—"didn't know the gun was loaded." The culprit had failed to eject the cartridge when he came off guard. He was tried by a military court-martial for neglect and gross carelessness; was sentenced to be dishonorably discharged from the United States army and to serve a term in a military prison.

On our arrival at Laramie, we received orders to proceed to our new stations, which were located all over the department. The 4th and 3rd Cavalry returned to Camp Robinson. Our troops were ordered to proceed to Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming, which was the headquarters of the 5th

Cavalry, commanded by Gen. Wesley Merritt of Civil War fame.

We arrived there the latter part of March, 1877. We must have marched nearly 1500 miles that winter. A portion of the time we had no forage, and had to depend upon grazing, and quite frequently would change our horses to fresh grass two or three times a night. When there was heavy snow on the ground, we would cut willow and cottonwood boughs, and pull up long grass and sweet sage and put it on the picket lines for the horses to feed on. In the morning the bark would be peeled from the limbs as smoothly as if it had been done with knives.

We lost very few animals, owing to the good management of General Mackenzie, who used great judgment in marching, in selecting fine camps and in seeing personally that we took good care of our stock.

We remained at Fort Russell until the latter part of May, and then we were ordered into the field. There were four troops commanded by Major Hart, which were to go into camp near the head of Tongue river, near Lake De Smet. This was on the old overland route to California.

Upon arrival at Fort Fetterman, L Troop was ordered to proceed to Fort Washakie, Wyoming, to escort Lieut.-Gen. Sheridan and his party across the Big Horn mountains to Fort Custer, on a tour of inspection.

We followed the North Platte river to old Fort Caspar, crossed over the Sweetwater, camping near Independence Rock, mentioned by Major John C. Fremont in his report to the Secretary of War in his trip across the continent. He was at the Rock August 1, 1842. It is about 1500 yards in circumference, the height at the north end about 200 feet; the southern end not quite so high. Near the middle is a depression of about sixty feet, where the soil supports scanty growth of shrubs. Where the surface is sufficiently smooth the rock is engraved with the names of travelers. Many



names, foremost in the history of the country, and some of well-known scientists, are to be found there, with those of travelers for pleasure, traders, curiosity-seekers and missionaries to the Indians. Some of these names have been washed away by the rains, but the greater number are yet legible.

Five miles above Independence Rock we came to a place called "Devil's Gate," where the Sweetwater cuts through the point of a granite ridge. The length of the passage is about 300 yards, and the width, 35 yards. The height is about 400 feet. The stream in the gate was almost choked by masses of rock which had fallen from above. It had been said that no one had ever been able to pass through the gate, owing to the great number of boulders and the volume of water rushing through it, which formed a regular torrent. Upon our return several months later, Colonel Tom Moore, the chief packer, passed through it on his mule. It was during low water, and he had great difficulty. It was considered a daring exploit.

On leaving Devil's Gate, we followed up the Sweetwater several miles, then crossed the river, thence over the Beaver divide to the river by that name. We came down what was known as the great slope of the Beaver range, more than five miles in length and having a fall of several thousand feet. From the Beaver, we went over a low divide to Twin Creek, and thence to the Little Popoagie, and from there to Lander City and Fort Washakie.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### ESCORT TO LIEUT.-GEN. P. H. SHERIDAN, U. S. A., FROM FORT WASHAKIE, WYOMING, TO FORT CUSTER, MONTANA



SERVED with the escort for the lieutenant-general of the army enroute from Fort Washakie, Wyoming, in June, 1877, to Fort Custer, Montana, via the Big Horn mountains, Lake De Smet and Fort C. F. Smith, for the purpose of visiting the Custer battlefield. General Sheridan's party consisted of General Sackett, inspector-general, our department commander, General Crook, and his two aides, Lieut. Walter S. Schuyler and Lieut. John G. Bourke, of the Fifth and Third Cavalry respectively. Colonel "Sandy" Forsyth and General Sheridan's aide, Dr. Julius H. Patzki, medical corps, were also with the escort. In addition, there were two or three citizen friends of General Sheridan. Lieutenant Carpenter, Ninth Infantry, quite a noted botanist, also was along. Lieut. Chas. Rockwell commanded the escort, Troop L, Fifth Cavalry. Frank Grouard, the chief of scouts, and about a dozen Indians, all of whom had taken part in the Custer massacre the previous year, completed the escort.

The Indians called General Crook "Gray Fox," and had the greatest respect for him. I know of no officer or civilian who knew the Indian character so well. Sharp Nose, a noted Arapahoe chief, told me that the general never had deceived them.

One of the Indian scouts accompanying the expedition was a Sioux who had taken an important part in the fight at Slim Buttes in September, 1876. He was credited with having shot and killed a scout, Jim White, nicknamed "Buffalo

Chips," in that battle. It appeared that this Indian, with two or three other warriors and several women, had taken refuge in a sort of cave, from which position they had poured a deadly fusillade into the troops under the command of Capt. Anson Mills. This particular Indian caught sight of "Chips" stealing up a near-by ridge, and killed him the first shot. He had then fought with great fury until his rifle became clogged by an empty shell, and had finally surrendered upon promise of good treatment. The Indian was accompanied on this expedition by his squaw, who had also been with him in the Slim Buttes fight. Both had been wounded in that engagement.

We had two pack-trains in charge of Tom Moore, the chief packer, who had a wide reputation as a great organizer of the United States army pack-trains.

Upon starting out, J. K. Moore, post trader at Fort Washakie, a man well known to older officers for his generosity, gave our party some whisky "for snake bites." Mr. Moore, the packer, who was messing with us at the time, said he would see that the whisky (which was in two champagne baskets) was placed on a safe mule.

A good-sized pack-train consists of forty pack-mules, twelve riding animals, and, last but not least, a bell-mare. There is a pack-master who has supervision and is responsible for the efficiency of the train; a cargador, who keeps the aparejos (saddles) in repair, and sees that they are properly fitted to each mule. The aparejos are numbered, and each mule has a corresponding number. This is essential, as the conformation of each mule differs. The cargador also regulates the weight and size of the packs, so that they will balance equally on the backs of the animals. This is very important, as a preventative of sore backs. In addition, there are a horse-shoer and eight packers. Every man belonging to the train, however, had to assist with the packing. On the march the cook leads the bell-mare. This

animal is usually of an off-color, so that she can be readily distinguished, and of a gentle disposition. The mules become perfectly infatuated with her, and are never out of sight of her, or out of hearing of the bell, which is tinkling most of the time. If there is any unusual excitement or danger of a stampede, the first thing to be done to quiet them is to commence ringing the bell. They will follow the bell animal wherever she may go.

Two men are required to pack a mule. During the packing a blinder is used—a broad strap that is passed over the eyes. After being packed, the strap is slipped off, and away the animal goes to join the bell-mare.

When the train arrives in camp after a day's march with troops, each pack-train goes to the organization to which it has been assigned, the load is removed, and the animals taken to the place designated for that particular organization's camp. Here the aparejos are removed, the blankets being left on for awhile until the backs of the animals dry. I know of a case where a troop of cavalry unsaddled on a very hot, sunny day, removed the blankets at once, and as a result, many of the horses' backs were so scalded that it made them sore, and in a few cases the hair came off.

When removed, the aparejos are placed in the form of a square, thereby forming a corral, leaving an opening for entrance on one side. When the mules are to be fed, they are driven into this corral and, if they are fed hay, remain there all night. Strange as it may seem, each animal knows its own equipment, and will take its place in front of it. As a rule, a mule will pack 300 pounds. I have known of 400 pounds being placed on a mule that carried the kitchen outfit, but in that instance the load grew lighter daily.

The advantage of a pack-train is that it can go anywhere with a command and keep up with it, while wagon-trains cannot. The packers are exceptionally good men at

their calling, receive good pay and live well. In fact, it is considered quite a treat to be invited to dine with them. A packer never sleeps cold at night, as he has the use of the blankets belonging to the train.

We left Fort Washakie the latter part of June, 1877, making a march of about 30 miles the first day. This proved to be too much for those who had not ridden a horse for a long time, so General Sheridan and some of his guests rode in an ambulance part of the way. Our first night's camp was situated near the confluence of the Big and Little Wind rivers, which form the Big Horn, after passing through the canyon of the Big Horn mountains, about 75 miles from Fort Washakie.

Before starting out, Lieutenant Rockwell told me to take charge of the troop, and he would superintend the pitching of the general's tentage on the trip. After our camp was established that night, Rockwell said he would try his hand at fishing, with a view to having a fish supper. The very first pool into which he cast his fly yielded a fine grayling. Continuing, he caught six others as fast as he could cast. As soon as this was known, a number of the party hastened to get out their fishing tackle and started for the river, anticipating fine sport. But they were disappointed; none of them got a rise. Apparently this little school of grayling was all there were in this hole. I think this was the first intimation that grayling inhabited these streams. There was quite a discussion among two or three of the party who were familiar with this variety of fish. I believe grayling are quite plentiful in the streams of Wisconsin and Michigan, as well as in parts of Montana.

The next morning we broke camp bright and early. Below our camp the Big Wind river broke through the Big Wind river range and our trail led through the gorge, gradually ascending the mountain. When the pack-train had nearly reached the top of the ridge, the trail narrowed, and just at this point the steady, safe mule that was detailed to



carry our antidote for rattlesnake poisoning, decided to turn around. While doing so, the animal was pushed over the cliff by one of the mules while trying to pass, and over it went, whisky and all, rolling down the side of the mountain some hundred feet or more, landing on a shelving rock, which no doubt saved the mule's life, for had it continued to roll, it would have taken a drop of several hundred feet into the chasm below. However, great was the fall thereof! Every bottle, save one, was broken. The mule was badly bruised, which gave some of us who were hard-hearted, considerable satisfaction. Someone suggested that the mule may have wanted to view the scenery, which was undoubtedly superb. Needless to say, there were no smiling faces in our mess that night.

A day or so after this, we came very near having another serious accident. The command was on its way down the mountain-side dismounted. The trail was winding—to lessen the grade—and so steep that we were obliged to lead our horses. Colonel Forsyth was just in front of me. Suddenly, away up the mountain-side, a large boulder weighing several hundred pounds was loosened and came bounding down the mountain in great leaps. In its flight it was bound to cross the winding trail which we were traveling, and I think it came into every man's mind at the same instant that someone was likely to get badly hurt or perhaps killed. All therefore held their breath, awaiting to see who the unfortunate man or horse would be. In the last bound, before it crossed our path, it struck the ground a few yards above the colonel and myself, rebounded and passed just over the colonel's horse's back! Had he been mounted the boulder surely would have hit him, in which event, both man and horse would doubtless have been killed.

On another occasion the colonel had a very narrow escape from drowning. Evidently he did not realize how dangerous it was to ford a mountain stream in high water, or else he did not think about it. Riding at the head of the column, he struck right out into the swollen flood, and over he went, horse and all! But his life was saved by Mr.

Patrick, the pack-master, who threw a line to him and pulled him ashore. His horse, which we did not find until the following morning and had given up for lost, came out on the opposite bank of the stream, several hundred yards below. The colonel must have had a charmed life. He served through the Civil War, and was with Beecher's scouts, whom Captain Bankhead's expedition rescued in 1868 on the Arickaree, after a nine days' siege with Cheyenne Indians under Roman Nose.

At the place where this near-accident occurred the water was so high that we were unable to cross that night. The next morning the stream had receded considerably, since because of the extreme cold the snow had not melted during the night. However, we had some trouble in finding a fording-place, but the Indians finally found one some distance down the river. The pack-mules had no trouble in crossing as their packs held them down, but the men had some difficulty, as the water very nearly carried their horses off their feet. I was riding "Crazy Horse" and he was so small and light that I hesitated about crossing on him, for I feared the swift current might carry him down stream. But noticing how nicely the pack-mules were crossing—their loads holding them down—I asked one of the packers who was no light-weight to get on behind me, and we crossed without difficulty.

On the Fourth of July we had a pretty camp surrounded by snow-capped mountains. The general invited all of us to call on him, and we took a stroll. After walking a few hundred yards from the camp, we came upon a large snow bank—quite a little glacier—and it developed that there were deposited therein several bottles of Mumm's Extra Dry champagne—one for each of us. After the delivery of a few remarks appropriate to the occasion by the general, we drank to the Stars and Stripes, sang with great emotion our national hymn, and wound up our celebration with three rousing cheers, the echo of which resounded back and forth several times quite distinctly.

A few years ago I made a trip through the lakes of Kil-

larney, Ireland, which are situated in the mountains, and are well known for their wonderful echoes. Our boatman called our attention to this by shouting, and suggested that the members of our party do likewise. However, the echo did not begin to compare with that up in the Big Horn mountains on that memorable Fourth of July.

A day or so after our celebration, General Crook, Lieutenant Schuyler and Mr. Delaney went out on a hunt, taking along a pack-mule to bring back their game. While out, a snow storm came up, so severe that the party was unable to make their way back to camp that night, but had to remain out. Their absence caused some little uneasiness in camp, but I told some members of our party that they need not worry, as it was not the first time these people had been obliged to remain away from camp; that they were skilled woodsmen and would rather enjoy their outing. They turned up all right the next morning, and Lieutenant Schuyler told me they put in a very comfortable night. Although they had no blankets, they built a good fire, leaned their backs against a big log and went to sleep. They brought in a mountain sheep and other game. The sheep's head and horns were about as pretty as I ever saw. I should judge the prize head weighed at least fifty pounds. I saw one in Colorado on one occasion that weighed sixty-eight pounds.

The head of the sheep which the party captured was given to General Sheridan who had it mounted. I afterward saw it at his quarters in Chicago, upon which occasion he called my attention with a great deal of pride, to a bear-skin rug on the floor. This also was a souvenir of our trip. The general thought he had killed it, but as a matter of fact, Frank Grouard, the chief scout, with some of the Indians, wounded the animal at the head of the canyon near camp. Grouard left his Indians to watch bruin, and hastened to camp to inform the general that he had a bear corraled in a near-by gulch. The general therefore went out and shot it. It was thought that he did not know the animal had been wounded.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### STAMPEDE OF OUR HORSES BY BUFFALO



ONE day we went into camp just over the divide of the Big Horn mountains. The ground was quite uneven, so that we could not pitch our tents with any regularity. After camp had been established, Captain Bourke and I were in our tent taking a siesta, when we were awakened by a jarring of the ground, followed by a dull rumbling. This created quite a commotion in camp. I at first thought a big storm was upon us, which is not very pleasant in the mountains, but we soon discovered what made the noise. There were at least a hundred mountain buffalo coming toward our camp, and they were almost upon us.

Our pack-animals were grazing below the camp. Upon seeing the buffalo, the herder in charge of the animals started for the corral as fast as possible, leading the bell-mare, and with all the mules following. Mr. Moore ran to the camp for a bell and commenced to ring it loudly. The mules responded. This quick action of the herder undoubtedly saved the mules from stampeding with the buffalo.

About a dozen of the buffalo broke through our camp, passing very near the tent occupied by Captain Bourke and myself. A big bull ran into the tent cords, breaking some of them, and pulling up the pins. Bourke, aroused from his nap, gave the bull a parting salute by running out in his pajamas and hitting the creature across the back with a tent pole. I was full of laughter, and a picture of the episode would have been humorous in the extreme. The bull, with others, ran up the side of the hill to a plateau where our horses were grazing, and stampeded them. They divided into two bands, the larger one going back on the trail we



had just come over. Although the side-lines were on the horses, the herders could not prevent them from stampeding. Two members of the herders followed the smaller bunch, and the remainder of the guard took after the balance. My pony, "Crazy Horse," was lariated near my tent, and was the only horse in camp. Jumping on him bareback, away I went to assist the herders.

My pony was named Crazy Horse after the celebrated Sioux chief by that name who led the Indians in the Custer massacre and was afterward killed at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, while trying to escape from the guard-house. The pony was captured by Major Anson Mills, 3rd Cavalry, (now a general on the retired list) in the Slim Buttes affair with the Sioux, September 9, 1876. It was reported at the time that the animal was Crazy Horse's war-pony, which he had ridden in the massacre of General Custer's command.

When I arrived where the horse herd had been grazing, I saw some of them just disappearing down the tortuous trail we had recently come over. I made after them, and soon overtook some of the stragglers that could not keep up with the others, because of their hobbles breaking and the chains swinging around their legs, hurting them. Soon I came across one of the herders who had been thrown from his horse. He had not been seriously hurt, and was holding three or four horses. I told him to tie them to the sagebrush and come on and we would pick them up on our return. This precaution was taken to prevent them from following and bruising their legs with the chains all the more.

Before proceeding, we caught a few more horses and tied them to the bushes. We soon met the other men coming back with the balance of the animals. After hard riding, with much danger to themselves, they had succeeded in heading the horses off. We recovered all but two. We



did not get back to camp until after dark, and were pretty well played out. I never rode harder in my life, nor over more dangerous ground. Nearly all the men had been thrown, and I was riding my second horse. When I reached the camp I had difficulty in dismounting, because of exhaustion. I could not throw my leg over the horse's back, but just had to fall off. During the latter part of my ride, all that I could do was to keep my knees stiff and ride clothes-pin fashion. I injured my sciatic nerve so badly that for several days I had to be helped on and off my horse, and was bothered for years with sciatic neuralgia. General Sheridan called me to his tent the next morning and thanked me for the recovery of the horses, saying that it looked very much at one time as if he would have to ride a mule. I told him the herd guard deserved all the praise, as they had succeeded in heading off the horses, while I only helped drive them back to camp, whereupon he called the men to his tent and thanked them.

It seemed that the Indians, on their own initiative caused the stampede by running into the buffalo herd. Supposing the general and his party would like to see a real buffalo chase they drove the bunch up the canyon toward the camp, not considering that they might stampede our horses and mules.

A few days out of Fort Washakie we came across a dead man, the body being badly decomposed—so much so that we could not tell by his garb whether he was a hunter or prospector, but presumably the latter. Near by was an old camping place, but nothing in it that gave us any clue to the man's identity. He had evidently been killed, but by whom will never be known. We buried the body and passed on.

## CHAPTER XL

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### FROM LAKE DE SMET TO CUSTER BATTLEFIELD



AT THE Clear Fork of the Powder river, afterward Fort McKinney, Col. Verlingain K. Hart joined us with three troops of the Fifth Cavalry. From there we took the old Bozeman Trail, passing through the abandoned posts of Forts Phil Kearney and C. F. Smith. These posts, with Fort Reno at the crossing of the Powder river, were abandoned by the Government in August, 1868, through a treaty with the Sioux, they agreeing to stop their hostilities provided the Government would relinquish those posts and give back the country to the Sioux, which was done. It is stated that the forts were burned by the Indians on the very day they were abandoned.

These posts formed a line of forts about 100 miles apart, extending from Fort Sydney, Nebraska, on the Union Pacific railroad, to Fort C. F. Smith, at the crossing of the Little Big Horn river in the present state of Montana. Fort Smith was the last post on the old Bozeman Trail. At the time we passed its site, there was a small ruin on the bank of the river in fair state of preservation. Fort Phil Kearney was established by Gen. Henry B. Carrington, lieutenant-colonel 18th Infantry, in July, 1866. It was located on the banks of Big Piney creek, a tributary of Powder river, some five miles from the Big Horn range, with the snow-capped peaks in plain sight. The elevation was about 5,200 feet.

On the present trip, when we passed the ruins of Fort Phil Kearney, quite a good portion of the flagstaff yet remained standing, and part of the old stockade was also left. The post cemetery, enclosed by a brick wall, was well pre-

served. A couple of years later when I passed through there, none of the cemetery wall remained. It had been removed, and the bricks had been used by the settlers to build chimneys for their cabins. Apparently they had no respect for the soldiers buried there. The Indians, however, had, which shows that the savages were more humane than the whites in this instance at least. Afterward the soldiers' bodies were exhumed and reburied in the National cemetery near the Custer battlefield.

Before reaching the abandoned post of Fort Phil Kearney, some eight miles away, our trail leading along and over Lodge Trail Ridge into Peno valley, our attention was attracted, in passing, to a prominent pile of rocks on which stood an Indian lodge pole with a tattered piece of cloth attached. We were told that this was the place where the Fetterman massacre occurred on Dec. 21, 1866, about ten years prior to the Custer catastrophe.

It appeared that a wagon train of logs for the construction of buildings at Fort Phil Kearney, was attacked by the Indians. The commanding officer, Gen. Henry B. Carrington, ordered to their succor, Capt. Wm. J. Fetterman, with forty-eight men of the 18th Infantry, and Lieut. Geo. W. Grummond with twenty-seven men of the Second Cavalry. Accompanying the expedition as volunteers were Capt. Frederick H. Brown, who had just received his promotion, and was under orders to join his regiment, and two citizens, Wheatley and Fisher, frontiersmen and hunters. When the Indians saw the soldiers coming to the rescue of the train, they withdrew, and were pursued by Fetterman and his men about five miles. Evidently the Indians were leading him on until they had drawn him into an ambush, then fell upon him in overwhelming numbers, exterminating the whole command. It was said that about 3,000 Indians were engaged in the fight, led by Chief Red Cloud.

At this pile of rocks Fetterman made his last stand, where his ammunition gave out. Here the Indians no doubt

rushed him, killing all the soldiers left alive, by arrows, tomahawks and spears. Of the forty-nine men found there, only four, besides the two officers, had been killed by bullets. Brown and Fetterman lay side by side, each with a bullet wound in the left temple, their heads burned and filled with powder around the wounds. Seeing that all was lost, they had evidently stood face to face and shot each other dead with their revolvers, rather than be captured alive. The bodies of the other men were found strung along the road. The remains of Grummond were found on the trail farthest from the fort, while those of the two citizens, Wheatley and Fisher, were located behind little piles of rocks. The body of Wheatley bristled with 105 arrows! Apparently they had been fighting desperately for their lives. They had been armed with modern Henry repeating rifles (just patented and put on the market that year), the magazines holding sixteen cartridges. By the side of one of the men fifty empty shells were counted, and nearly as many by the other. They must have done wonderful execution with the new repeating guns, and if their ammunition had not given out, the chances are they would have stood the Indians off, not only saving their own lives, but those of many others who were not as well armed.

This massacre was another case of disobedience of orders. Captain Fetterman had had very little Indian experience, having been in the country but a short time. He had begged for the command of the expedition, pleading seniority of rank as justification of his request, and Carrington had reluctantly acquiesced. Fetterman's orders were to relieve the wagon-train and drive away the Indians, *but not under any circumstances* to pursue them beyond Lodge Trail ridge. As soon as he had accomplished this, he was to return to the fort immediately. He may not have understood his orders—we are in hopes that such is the case—but the fact remains that he was again cautioned just before leaving the post. Through his zeal, excitement and over-confidence he probably did not think about his orders until it was too late to turn back.

## CHAPTER XLI

### VISIT TO THE CUSTER BATTLEFIELD



OUR visit to the Custer battlefield on the Little Big Horn river occurred about a year after the fight. A few days before our arrival, a severe hail storm had devastated the whole valley, washing out several of the bodies which had been buried near a ravine. The men had been buried where they fell in battle, and the graves were marked by stakes driven into the ground at the head and foot of each. An empty cartridge shell containing a slip of paper with the name of the fallen man was placed at the head so that the bodies could be properly identified when exhumed.

While we were there, I reburied all the bodies that had been washed out. A few months later all the bodies were reburied on a commanding position on the battlefield. General Custer was reburied at West Point. A monument was erected to their memory, which is surrounded by a high iron fence to prevent vandals from chipping or disfiguring the shaft. It was officially declared a Government cemetery, and as such will always be cared for. The superintendent lives on the grounds in a neat little lodge.

### HISTORY OF THE CUSTER FIGHT

Gen. George Armstrong Custer, lieutenant-colonel Seventh Cavalry, commanded the regiment in the memorable but disastrous battle of the Little Big Horn. General Sturgis, the colonel, who lost his son in the engagement, was on other duty. General Custer attacked the villages of Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, June 25, 1876, and lost his life, with 208 of his immediate command. The Indians were led by Crazy Horse and Gall of the Sioux, and Two Moons of the Northern Cheyennes, and not by Sitting Bull, as is generally supposed. Sitting Bull was the great medicine man of the Sioux nation, and during the battle was "making medicine"



on the mesa, just in the rear of, and overlooking, the Indian village, which extended some four miles along the right bank of the Little Big Horn river, and was estimated to have contained from 10,000 to 15,000 men, women and children. Probably one-third of this number represented the fighting strength of the band.

Gen. Alfred H. Terry of Fort Fisher fame, during the Civil War, had taken the field with a large command from Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota. He ordered General Custer to proceed with his regiment toward the valley of the Little Big Horn, scout that country and see if he could locate the hostiles, who were supposed to be up in that mountainous country. Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, without permission, had left their agencies with a large following of their people.

General Custer's orders were not to bring on an engagement if he could possibly avoid it. It was General Terry's intention if he succeeded in locating the hostiles, to try and get in touch with them and, if possible, prevail upon them to return to their homes without fighting.

It may be well to explain here that it was generally known that Custer was under a cloud—that he had incurred the enmity of the War Department and President Grant, and that the Secretary of War, General Belknap, had ordered, or was about to order, Custer to Washington to answer certain charges. It was believed by many that General Custer had fully made up his mind that if the opportunity offered of making a big showing against the hostiles, he would take advantage of it. If he succeeded he evidently thought it would appease the minds of the "powers that be" at Washington, and thus restore himself to their good graces. I do not think he made the attack wholly to counteract the feeling toward him, but he did it for personal aggrandizement; for if he had succeeded in his undertaking and destroyed the hostiles, he would have been lauded to the skies, especially by the Western people, who, to a great extent, "had no use for Injuns, only dead ones."

General Custer was a man who was extremely fond of

notoriety, inclined to spectacular display, impulsive, impetuous and daring. There was no such word as fear in his vocabulary. I have heard it said in his defense, and have seen it published in the papers, that he would not have made the attack on Sitting Bull's village had he known that it contained so many hostiles.\* But those who so contend did not know the man. The great number of Indians did not worry Custer; "the more, the merrier." He was like Fetterman at Fort Phil Kearney—he thought he could whip the whole Sioux nation with the Seventh Cavalry. It was well known that thousands of Indians had left their agencies in a fighting mood, and were congregating somewhere in the Big Horn country for the purpose of holding a council with all the tribes of the Northwest, and to decide upon a general outbreak against the whites.

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\*He DID know it was a large village. Major V. K. Hart of Custer's regiment, who was with him when the scouts reported that they had discovered an immense Indian village, which extended well up and down the Little Big Horn river, told me that upon receipt of this information Custer pulled off his hat, waved it about his head and exclaimed, "Custer's luck! The biggest Indian village ever struck!" Immediately after this he announced his plan of attack. He had made a similar attack in November, 1868, on the villages of Black Kettle, Satanta, Lone Wolf and Kicking Bird of the Cheyennes, Comanches, Arapahoes and Kiowas on the Washita river, in what was then the Indian Territory, but now Oklahoma. This village was fully as large as that of Sitting Bull. Custer's plan of attack in both these fights was by dividing his forces into several divisions and attacking simultaneously from different points. Military men concede that Custer made a mistake in thus attacking the Sioux on the Little Big Horn, as he knew the Indians outnumbered him greatly.

In the battle of the Washita, Major Elliott, the second in command, with Capt. Hamilton and nineteen enlisted men, were killed. In some manner Major Elliott, with several men, was separated from the main command. Their remains were not discovered for several days. Friends of Elliott and Hamilton allege they were deserted by Custer, just as they now blame Reno for not going to Custer's rescue.

In the Washita fight, Custer wiped out two of the villages, destroying the lodges by fire, together with their contents, and capturing over 700 ponies. Not being able to herd these animals back to his post, they were shot on the spot, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Indians again.

No doubt Custer used good judgment in withdrawing from the Washita immediately after the fight. Had he not done so, the battle of the Washita might have been his last, for the Indians belonging to the other villages further down the stream were massing their forces as rapidly as possible to attack him. As it was, many of them followed him nearly to Camp Supply, whence the expedition started. Comment on these two battles must be left to the reader.

Custer's command consisted of the following:

Commissioned officers .....	31
Enlisted men .....	585
Citizens .....	3
White Scouts .....	3
Colored interpreter .....	1
Crows .....	6
Half-breed guide .....	1
Arickarees .....	25
Total .....	655

On the 24th of June, the Indian scouts, White-Man-Runs-Him, Hairy Moccasin, Curley and Goes-Ahead, came in with the information that they had seen, on the Little Rosebud, fresh signs of Indians, and that their trail was leading toward the Little Big Horn valley.

Custer immediately saddled up and made a night march of four or five hours, then bivouacked and moved out at early dawn the following morning. He had been on the march only a few hours when the scouts came in under great excitement with the information that from a high point overlooking the valley they had seen an immense camp of Indians on the banks of the Little Big Horn river. The column was halted, and orderlies dispatched to notify all officers to report to the general at once. He informed them that the hostile camp had been located, and gave them the following instructions for the attack:

Major Reno, with three troops, A, M, and G, to proceed to a point on the river which was just above the camp, move down and attack the enemy. Captain Benteen, with three troops, H, D, and K, was to move in a southerly direction, and to Reno's left, and if he saw any Indians, to attack them. Captain MacDougal, with his troop and a detachment of twelve men from each organization, and with the pack-train, was to keep in touch with Reno's command. The extra detail was to equalize the different commands, giving each troop about fifty men. Custer, with the remaining five troops, C, E, F, I and L, would continue along and behind the high ridge they were on, so as not to be seen by the enemy, and he would attack the lower end of the village,

which extended at least three or four miles down the right bank of the river.

I think Custer may have intended Major Reno and Captain Benteen to make the first attack on the hostiles. My reason for so thinking is that they had only four or five miles to go to reach the river, while Custer had to travel at least twice that distance. If Reno made the first attack—which he did—this would attract the attention of the full fighting force of the enemy, which would hasten to repel Reno, not knowing there were other white soldiers in the immediate vicinity. During that time, Custer would appear on the scene and attack as contemplated, which, it was expected, if pressed with his usual vigor, zeal and fearlessness, would throw the hostiles into consternation.

Reno carried out his part of the program—possibly not with the intrepidity that was expected of him—but he did the best he knew how. He was fighting a desperate enemy; they were striving to save their women and children. Only a few days before (June 17) they had had a successful encounter with General Crook's command, 40 miles south on the Rosebud river, Montana. Crook's command numbered five times that of Reno's. This victory of course, encouraged the Indians, and they fought all the better.

I will give here, in part, the version of the fight as rendered by the Indians who were with us when we visited the battlefield. They had been carefully selected at the agency

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Considerable dispute has always been prevalent regarding the condition of the body of General Custer when found on the battlefield of the Little Big Horn. Some writers contend that his body was scalped and otherwise mutilated. Reliable and authentic information on this subject is given by Lieut. James H. Bradley, Seventh Infantry, chief of scouts for General Gibbon's command, which was approaching the battlefield on the morning of June 27th. Lieutenant Bradley was riding in advance of the command some two or three miles to the left of Gibbon's column, and personally made the discovery of the killing of the entire command of Custer.

In a letter to the *Helena Herald*, under date of July 25, 1876—four weeks only after the fight—he states that Custer's body was wholly un mutilated, and that even the wounds which caused his death were scarcely discovered. Even the officers of the Seventh Cavalry (among them being Capt. Benteen), who visited the field later in the day, before the bodies were buried, stated that they had not observed the wounds which caused the general's death (he had been shot in the left temple and left side). Lieutenant Bradley states that the expression on Custer's face was as peaceful as though



to accompany General Sheridan and party. They were prominent chiefs in their tribes, and all of them had taken active parts in the Custer fight. One of them had been badly wounded in the engagement.

These Indians stated that Reno's command was first seen about a mile and a half from the river. By the lay of the ground he *could* have been seen further away. He was discovered by an Indian boy who was herding ponies. The lad hastened on horseback to alarm the village, about a mile distant. The camp was at once in great commotion. The warriors hastened on foot and mounted to repel the attacking soldiers. The Indians had some little time to collect their senses before Reno could reach their village. This repelling force was small at first, but gradually increased until

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he had just lain down for a rest and fallen asleep, the officers remarking: "You could almost imagine him standing before you."

Regarding the other bodies found on the Custer field, of which there were a total of 208, Lieutenant Bradley further asserts that beyond scalping of the bodies he saw but very little mutilation, and that in even the comparatively few cases of disfiguration, it appeared to have been the result of blows with knife or tomahawk or war club to finish a wounded man, rather than deliberate mutilation. The bodies, he asserts, were all stripped, Custer's body also being entirely naked. Further, several of the bodies were entirely clothed, as though the Indians had either overlooked them, or did not care to visit these bodies, some of which were at a distance from the main command.

However, many of Reno's men who fell in the fight in the river bottom, were frightfully butchered. It must be remembered that Reno's engagement took place between three and four miles from where Custer fought; that there were probably 5,000 warriors pitted against the two commands, armed with Winchester repeating rifles and other improved arms, while the troops were using the 45-70 Springfield single-shot carbine only; that the savages were between the two commands in full possession of that part of the valley, where their village extended up and down the Little Big Horn river for a distance of four miles, and contained approximately 15,000 men, women and children. With Reno were about 125 men; with Custer, 208, the balance being with Captain McDougal and Captain Benteen, who were scouting the country to the left, and never got into the fight until late in the afternoon, after Reno had reached his position on the bluffs. Neither Reno, Benteen or McDougal knew what had become of Custer until Lieutenant Bradley made the discovery on the morning of June 27th, in person, and reported it to his commanding officer, Gen. John Gibbon, who was marching up the valley with the expectation of arriving in time to take a part in the battle. Lieutenant Bradley's discovery of the bodies of the Custer command was the first inkling of their fate.

The battle of the Little Big Horn is a real study, and no person should read it hastily. Many things must be taken into account, and every detail carefully followed before the student of Western history can fully understand the "whys and wherefores" of Custer's defeat.



it outnumbered Reno greatly. Probably every available warrior in the camp at one time was fighting his soldiers. Upon Reno's arrival at the ford, he stopped to let his horses drink which occupied from ten to fifteen minutes. He has been condemned for doing this, but, taking into consideration the circumstances, to my mind it was a case of necessity. His poor animals were nearly famished for want of water. They had been without it for 24 hours, and the water they had last drunk was so strong of alkali that they were unable to drink much of it. This made them more thirsty and to add to their misery, the day was extremely hot. In view of the condition the horses were in, it would have been almost impossible to have forced them across the stream without allowing them time to appease their thirst. In my judgment, the giving them some water could not have taken much time. Had Reno attempted to cross the stream without watering, he probably would have experienced much difficulty.

Reno crossed the Little Big Horn some distance above the Indian encampment, and no doubt came in contact with some of the Indians sooner than he expected—at first only a few, but gradually in increasing numbers, until they outnumbered him greatly. The first trooper to fall was about a half mile above the camp. His grave was pointed out to us. Apparently he was a non-commissioned officer, for lying near by was part of a trouser's leg with a yellow stripe on it. Reno found that he was greatly outnumbered, and could not advance any further, so he dismounted in one of the many bends of the river, where there was considerable timber. Here he fought the savages for awhile, then decided to cross the river and take the strong position which he later occupied. While fording the stream he lost several men, whose bodies fell from their horses and floated down stream. Many writers condemn Reno for not remaining in the timber. He might have done so and all might have been well; but he was on the ground, knew what he had to contend with, and doubtless some of his officers approved of the new position. Again, he might have been burned out.



**CUSTER'S LAST STAND**

Painted especially for this work by Theodore B. Pitman, Boston, Mass



The Indians did start some fires, but the grass was too green to burn readily, although a good wind might have fanned the flames, and gradually the fire would have driven them out. Reno no doubt thought he might be burned out.\*

It seems to me that the only thing Reno could do in the premises was to cross the river and occupy the position on the bluffs. He had lost several men before crossing the river, and about twenty-nine or thirty more while fording the stream and retreating to the bluffs.

Suddenly, and without warning, Custer and his gallant men debouched from a ravine about four miles below where Reno was fighting. This was the first intimation the Indians had that he was in the country. At this time, so they told us, the Indians thought they were fighting all the soldiers. Leaving a number of warriors to keep Reno's men busy, the balance swarmed down upon Custer. I do not believe he ever reached the river—at least, there were no men buried nearer than within fifty or seventy-five yards of it. Custer was swiftly driven back to the place where he made his last stand.

Reno was relieved on June 27th by General Gibbon of the Seventh Infantry. In the two days' fighting there were 265 officers and men killed, and 52 wounded, as follows:

CUSTER'S COMMAND:	KILLED
Commissioned officers .....	13
Enlisted men .....	191
Citizens .....	3
Half-breed guide .....	1
Total .....	208

\*In the retreat of Reno from the river bottom, several men were left behind, their horses having become stampeded or lost. Among these men were Lieut. Charles De Rudio, Scout William Jackson, Interpreter Fred Girard and Private John O'Neil. They concealed themselves in the thick underbrush until dark, and then attempted to rejoin the command of Reno on the bluffs. De Rudio and O'Neil became separated from the others and underwent some thrilling experiences before they succeeded in joining their comrades, eventually getting into Reno's lines about 2 A. M. on the morning of June 27th. Lieutenant De Rudio died in Los Angeles, Cal., some six or eight years ago. He has one daughter yet living in that city.

RENO'S COMMAND:		KILLED	WOUNDED
Commissioned officers .....		3	
Enlisted men .....		48	52
White scout .....		1	
Colored interpreter .....		1	
Arickaree scouts .....		3	
Crow scouts .....		1	
Total .....		57	52

RECAPITULATION:		
Total killed .....		265
Total wounded .....		52
Total killed and wounded .....		317

### OFFICERS OF SEVENTH CAVALRY KILLED AT BATTLE OF THE LITTLE BIG HORN

Lieutenant-Colonel George A. Custer

#### CAPTAINS

T. W. Custer  
M. W. Keogh

G. W. Yates

#### LIEUTENANTS

W. W. Cook  
A. E. Smith  
Donald McIntosh  
James Calhoun  
J. E. Porter

B. H. Hodgson  
J. G. Sturgis  
W. Van W. Reilly  
J. J. Crittenden  
H. M. Harrington

The bodies of Harrington, Porter and Sturgis never were found.

#### ASSISTANT SURGEONS

C. E. Lord

J. M. DeWolf

The following civilians also were killed:

Boston Custer (brother of the General)  
Armstrong Reed (Custer's nephew)  
Mark Kellogg (newspaper correspondent)  
Charlie Reynolds (chief scout and guide)  
Frank C. Mann  
Isaiah Dorman (negro interpreter)  
"Mitch" Bouyer (half-breed scout)

#### INDIAN SCOUTS KILLED

Bloody Knife (Custer's favorite Indian scout)  
Bob-Tail Bull  
Stab

The Indians told us there were 3,000 warriors pitted against the troops, and doubtless there were fully that number.

In this fight, Crazy Horse and Gall were the head fighting chiefs but Sitting Bull took no part in the battle. The position on the plateau back of the village, where Sitting Bull was praying, was pointed out to us. He was back there



while Crazy Horse was leading on his warriors to victory. Crazy Horse was a great leader among his people. It was his voice that sang out, when his men were dropping back from Custer's fire, "Come on! It is a great day to die! Cowards to the rear!" It was the great bravery of Crazy Horse that first broke Custer's line.

We located the spot where Custer made his final stand. His brother, Tom Custer, Cook, his adjutant, Autie Reed, Custer's nephew, Mark Kellogg, correspondent of the Bismarck Tribune, and two or three of Custer's officers, were buried there. The remains of their dead horses were lying near by. Captain Bourke and I cut off the hoofs of the horse supposed to have been ridden by Custer (a sorrel with three white fetlocks). Bourke had his pair made into ink-stands, and gave one of them to a Philadelphia museum. I placed mine in a grain sack, and being ordered out against the hostile Nez Perces in 1877, I left the sack, with some other property, in our wagons, which was lost.

We went over the battlefield pretty thoroughly and located the spot where Captain Keogh and several of his men of Company I had followed him. Here was a slight depression in the ground. Evidently at one time it had been a buffalo wallow, and the wind had blown out the dirt, forming a semi-circular depression covering several yards. The graves were around this depression. The men were buried where they fell, which clearly showed that their position had been taken for defense. This was the only position we found where it looked as if a defense had been made, for the men had fallen all over the battlefield, here and there.

Arriving at Fort Custer we found Generals Sherman and Terry. General Buell, of Civil War fame, was building the post. There were three or four steamers unloading stores and material for the fort at the time, and the river was getting low—so much so that it alarmed the authorities, they being afraid the steamers would not be able to get back down the river. Our squadron, therefore, was detailed to assist in unloading the boats. They succeeded in getting away, but I have been told that they were about the last boats that ever reached Fort Custer.

## "COMANCHE"

The sole living thing found on the Custer field, two days after the fight, was "Comanche," the claybank horse ridden by Capt. Miles W. Keogh of Troop I. Lieut. G. I. Nowlan, of Capt. Keogh's troop, who had been on detached service with Gen. Terry's staff, was with the men gathering the dead, and discovered a horse standing in a ravine severely wounded by bullets and arrows, and half-dead from loss of blood.

The animal was at once recognized as Comanche, the charger of Capt. Keogh, who, with his whole troop had been killed in the fight. Lieut. Nowlan caused the animal to be driven as humanely as possible to the steamer "Far West," which carried the wounded of Reno's command down to Bismarck. Capt. Marsh, in charge of the boat, provided a comfortable stall for him, and a veterinary surgeon with the command extracted the bullets and arrow-heads and dressed the wounds thoroughly. The horse commenced to improve rapidly, and reached Fort Lincoln, near Bismarck, safely.

After the Seventh Cavalry returned from the field, special orders were issued regarding Comanche. These were to the effect that from that time to the end of his days no person should ever throw a leg over the animal's back. A man from Troop I was detailed as his keeper, to feed and care for him, and to lead him, bridled and saddled and draped in black, on all dress parades and other functions of a regimental character.

Wherever the Seventh Cavalry went, Comanche accompanied the command. In 1888 the regiment was ordered to take station at Fort Riley, Kansas, where during the winter of 1891 or '92, Comanche died. His body was mounted by Prof. Dyche of the University of Kansas, at Lawrence, where Comanche may be seen to this day, as lifelike as ever. He was 28 years of age at the time of his death.

## THE STORY OF CURLEY, CROW SCOUT

The battle of the Little Big Horn has produced many alleged "sole survivors." All are fakers, pure and simple. Not a white man of Custer's command escaped, and even the story of Curley, one of the Crow scouts with the Custer command, cannot be substantiated with any degree of accuracy. Just before Custer separated from the other commands, "Mitch" Bouyer, in charge of the Crow scouts, told them they had done all that had been expected of them—that they had located the village, but were not expected to take any part in the fighting unless they chose to; that he advised them to go to the pack train at once while there was time. Bouyer himself remained with Custer and was killed. Curley did not go with the other Crows, but made his escape down the Little Big Horn river to its junction with the Big Horn, where the supply steamer, "Far West," was awaiting orders. He could speak no English, but through signs, gave Grant Marsh, captain of the boat, to understand that a big battle had taken place in which the soldiers had been whipped. Curley's own story is to the effect that he escaped from the battlefield in the dust, smoke and general confusion of battle, by disguising himself as a Sioux Indian. The reader must form his own conclusions as to the truth of his story, but it has no actual foundation. Curley and three others of the Crow scouts are yet alive on the Crow reservation, near the Custer battlefield. The other scouts repudiate Curley's story.

## CHAPTER XLII

### THE KILLING OF CRAZY HORSE\*



ON St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1876, Col. J. J. Reynolds with troops of the Second and Third regiments of cavalry, attacked and destroyed, in zero weather, the village of the renowned Sioux chieftain, Crazy Horse, on Powder river. This chieftain had refused to come in and live on a reservation under the eye of the government, but lived far remote from either army posts or white settlements, hunting the buffalo.

Crazy Horse's people suffered untold hardships after the destruction of their village. He managed however, to recapture the larger part of his pony herd, which Reynolds through gross carelessness, allowed to escape.

It will be remembered that it was Crazy Horse who led in the attack against Crook's troops three months later to a day—June 17, on the Rosebud. Crook was obliged to return to his permanent camp, and this battle has been generally conceded a victory for the Indians.

One week later, Custer fought his last battle against the forces of Crazy Horse and other allied tribes on the Little Big Horn river. The command under Custer was totally annihilated, not a white trooper surviving to tell the tale.

A few months after the Little Big Horn fight, Crazy Horse surrendered at Red Cloud agency, in Northwestern Nebraska, yielding because he desired his people to have rest from the continual harassing by United States troops, and because the buffalo were getting scarce. Further, it had come down to a question of food for his wearied tribesmen.

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\*I am indebted to Major-General Jesse M. Lee (retired) now living at Los Angeles, Cal., for the facts regarding the killing of Crazy Horse.

His fighting spirit was by no means broken, and he was yet looked upon as a great soldier-chief.

A few weeks prior to the surrender of Crazy Horse, General Crook promised the friendly and former hostile Indians that when matters were amiably settled, they should have a great buffalo hunt together in the autumn. After the arrival of Crazy Horse, he, too, was given this same promise, which, at the time, was considered a diplomatic move, but which later developed into much trouble and danger.

At Red Cloud agency, at the time Crazy Horse surrendered, was a half-breed interpreter named Louis Richard (or Reshaw) who had a beautiful daughter with whom Crazy Horse fell in love. The attentions of the renowned chief were reciprocated, and finally he sent the girl's father several ponies—as was the usual custom of obtaining a wife among the Plains tribes. The young woman immediately became an inmate of Crazy Horse's lodge.

The interpreter, however, did not look with favor upon the match and demanded the return of his daughter. Crazy Horse merely referred the matter to the maiden herself. She announced her determination to remain with the chief, and the father was so notified.

Stationed at Camp Robinson, near the Red Cloud agency, was Lieut. Philo Clark, an army officer of great popularity, who had general oversight of the late hostiles, particularly Crazy Horse. Lieutenant Clark's specific duty was to keep a watchful eye upon his movements, and report to General Crook anything that savored of trouble.

The hot days of summer were passing, and with them came the desire of the Indians to start out on the promised buffalo hunt. There had been no trouble on the reservation, and peace seemed to have settled down. Crazy Horse was very eager for the hunt, which was now deemed an unwise procedure. It was thought that if both the hostiles

and friendlies went out on a general buffalo hunt, some of the former might take the opportunity to slip away and join Sitting Bull's band of irreconcilables in Canada.

Chief Spotted Tail was loud in his denunciation of the proposed hunt, as was his right-hand sub-chief, Swift Bear. "The man who planned this hunt needs a heart and a brain," shrewdly observed the latter.

Gen. Jesse M. Lee (now retired), agent at Spotted Tail reservation, together with Major Burke, commanding officer at Camp Sheridan, near the agency, discussed the matter with the two chiefs. Spotted Tail held that if the Indians went out, it might precipitate another Indian war, and that it was a dangerous experiment to try. The arguments which the shrewd old Spotted Tail presented were unanswerable, and it was thereupon decided to call the hunt off.

Crazy Horse was among the disappointed ones. However, no trouble arose at the time. It was then suggested sending the leading chiefs to Washington to hold a great pow-wow with the "Great Father." But when Crazy Horse was approached on the subject, he declined to be among the number. "I am not hunting for any Great Father," he haughtily responded. "My father is with me, and there is no Great Father between me and the Great Spirit."

Toward the latter part of August, an especial friend of Crazy Horse's, known as Touch-the-Clouds, whose honesty was beyond question in the minds of both Agent Lee and Major Burke, informed the two latter that Lieutenant Clark had sent for him to go over to Red Cloud agency for some purpose which was not given out. This was about the time trouble was brewing among the Nez Perce Indians of Oregon. On the following day, word was received at Spotted Tail agency from Red Cloud agency that sixty Indian scouts were wanted to go out and fight the Nez Percés. This created much excitement at both reservations.



The Indian scouts were made ready to leave, when an order came canceling it.

Major Burke, on August 31, received a note from Lieutenant Clark stating that Touch-the-Clouds and High Bear had told him they were going to leave the agency and go north on the war-path. "Crazy Horse has worked Touch-the-Clouds exactly to his way of thinking," the note concluded.

Consternation reigned upon receipt of this information. The next day official word came from Red Cloud agency that the northern Indians were to be surrounded, and it was requested that the same thing be done at Spotted Tail agency.

Both Lee and Major Burke were greatly surprised to learn that Touch-the-Clouds was going north with Crazy Horse to fight the whites, and a conference was decided upon at Burke's house. There were present, Louis Bordeaux and Charles Tackett (two of the most famous interpreters of the Sioux nation), Frank Grouard, Crook's famous guide, and Joe Merivale, an old-time scout and interpreter. The friendly, or loyal Indians were represented by chiefs Spotted Tail, Swift Bear, Two Strike and White Thunder; of the late hostiles, Touch-the-Clouds, Red Bear and High Bear. Major Burke and several army officers represented the Government.

Touch-the-Clouds was asked to repeat what he had said, and explain what he meant at Red Cloud on the previous day. Louis Bordeaux acted as interpreter, and the other interpreters were requested to carefully note the conversation and to follow every word. It thereupon developed that Frank Grouard had misinterpreted Touch-the-Clouds and given an entirely wrong import to the chief's real meaning.

As soon as this became apparent to Touch-the-Clouds, he became furious, and denounced Grouard as a liar, stating

that he never had said he was going to fight the whites; that General Crook, the Great Father and others had deceived him, because they had been told when they came to the agency there would be absolute peace, and now he and his Indians were wanted to go out on the warpath, a thing which he violently condemned as a breach of faith. Touch-the-Clouds said that he had first been asked to surrender his gun, and had done so; then he had been asked to enlist as a scout to keep peace and order at the agency, and he had done that; then he was asked to give up the buffalo hunt and he had acquiesced. NOW, the Great Father (declared the chief), together with General Crook and Lieutenant Clark had "put blood on their faces and turned them toward war"; that both he and Crazy Horse had been deceived and lied to, but nevertheless, they would do as Clark said, and war it should be! They would all go north and fight—the troops would have to go, too, and when they met the Nez Perces, "all would soon be peace."

Touch-the-Clouds repeated and explained all that both he and Crazy Horse had said, adding that Frank Grouard had given it a meaning they had not intended. It was an embarrassing moment for Grouard, who, quite naturally disliked to acknowledge that he had misinterpreted Touch-the-Cloud's statement, but which it was quite apparent he had done, according to the interpretation of Bordeaux.

It was evident that the trouble originated in asking the northern Indians to go and fight the Nez Perces, which they could not understand. However, Lieutenant Clark had acted on Grouard's interpretation, and additional troops were sent for to come to Red Cloud, until there was a total fighting force of about 1000 well-armed troops on the ground. The garrison at Spotted Tail was only about ninety men—a mere handful of fighters had an outbreak at that agency occurred, where there were 6,000 Indians. But Chief Spotted Tail was standing by the Government, and

with his faithful allies was looked upon as a tower of strength.

Lieutenant Clark had suddenly lost all faith in Crazy Horse and Touch-the-Clouds. Agent Lee, at Spotted Tail agency, went over to Red Cloud on September 2d, and there was General Crook. It looked as if trouble were brewing. Crook was informed that there was some mistake—that all the Indians at Spotted Tail were quiet and that there was no intention on their part of taking to the warpath. Agent Lee was directed to see Lieutenant Clark and tell him all about the matter. This was done, but Clark was *positive* that Grouard had made no mistake. Lee repeated all that had occurred at the interview with Touch-the-Clouds, where Grouard had partially admitted that he had given a wrong interpretation, and wound up the interview with Clark by declaring that he could positively guarantee that no Indian from Spotted Tail agency would go north. Clark, however, smiled incredulously—plainly not believing Lee's statement.

General Crook finally remarked, "Mr. Lee, I am glad you have come. I don't want to make any mistake, for it would, to the Indians, be the basest treachery to make a mistake in this matter."

Lee felt easier when it was thought that he had accomplished enough to secure peace at Spotted Tail agency, although he could see that it was yet Clark's intention to have something done to Crazy Horse and his band—just at the time, it was not apparent what this was.

The following day four troops of cavalry came in from Fort Laramie, and on the afternoon of that day, Lee was told confidentially that it was the intention to surround Crazy Horse's camp the next morning. He asked if word of this intended act had been sent to Major Burke at Spotted Tail agency, and a negative reply was given. Lee urged the importance of getting word to Burke—that an Indian cour-

ier from the Indians at Red Cloud would probably get there first, with exaggerated news of the trouble; excitement would follow and trouble ensue.

Chief Spotted Tail was over at Red Cloud agency that afternoon, having been sent for by the authorities at Camp Robinson. Lee considered it important to have the chief back to his own camp as quickly as possible, and started in the morning at 3 o'clock to get him. When Spotted Tail and Lee were about to start for their own agency, the latter said to Lieutenant Clark: "Don't let Crazy Horse get away; he might come over to Spotted Tail agency." Clark replied, "Lee, don't you worry about that. Crazy Horse can't make a move without my knowing it, and I can have him whenever I want him. I'll send the news of our success by a good courier."

Everything was quiet at Spotted Tail agency when Lee and the chief arrived there. Here Spotted Tail's sub-chiefs were called together and told that probably some trouble might occur at Red Cloud that afternoon, but that it must not affect them. They were to keep the people quiet and have no fear.

News from Red Cloud was awaited with considerable anxiety. It was like waiting for a powder magazine to blow up—nobody could tell who would get hurt or what the result might be. About 4 o'clock the expected happened. An Indian courier mounted on a lathered, panting pony arrived at Spotted Tail with the startling information that "their friends were fighting at Red Cloud and the troops were coming to Spotted Tail."

Joe Merivale, well known and respected by the northern Indians, was on hand to allay any excitement and prevent an uproar. With some of the chiefs he was accomplishing results, when word came that Crazy Horse had just arrived in camp! He had escaped from Red Cloud and fled to Spotted Tail agency!

Immediately pandemonium reigned. Here was their renowned leader—the undefeated Crazy Horse, the victor of every battle in which he had engaged during the '76 campaign; the idol of his followers and their one great hero. He was being hunted by the troops and was in the midst of his friends!

With magic swiftness the 300 or more tepees came to the ground and had it not been for White Thunder and some of the more loyal Brules, a stampede would immediately have resulted, followed by indiscriminate slaughter of the whites and the beginning of another merciless Indian war.

These chiefs, assisted by some of the reliable friendlies, harangued the aroused Indians and finally order was restored. Word was sent to the Indians under Touch-the-Clouds to bring Crazy Horse to the post, about three miles distant from the Indian encampment. Agent Lee, Major Burke, Bordeaux, the interpreter, and Dr. Koerper started out to meet them. Half way to the camp, Crazy Horse was overtaken. He was coming into the post, surrounded by about 300 mounted and heavily armed Indians.

Just as the parade ground was reached, faithful old Spotted Tail with 300 trusted Brule warriors, armed with Winchesters, arrived on the scene. It was a moment of tremendous, tense excitement, and it looked as if serious trouble were about to occur. Old Spotted Tail was the coolest individual in the crowd. Garbed in a plain Indian blanket, and without any insignia of his rank of chief, he stepped into the circle, and thus addressed himself to Crazy Horse:

"We never have trouble here! The sky is clear; the air is still and free from dust! You have come here, and you must listen to me and my people! *I am chief here!* We keep the peace! *We, the Brules, do this!* They obey me! Every Indian who comes here must listen to me! You say you want to come to this agency and live peaceably! If you stay here, you must listen to me! That is all!"



Can you picture the scene? Indian speech is hard to render, but could one have been there and listened to the telling points of old Spotted Tail's ringing words, and heard the pauses, which were emphasized and punctuated by the click of loaded rifles, it would have struck the observer as the most dramatic moment of his life. At its conclusion Spotted Tail was greeted with four hundred vociferous "*How's!*"

Obedient to the order that the crowds disperse, the Indians returned to their camp, and Crazy Horse was conducted to Major Burke's office to have a talk.

To disgress a moment: It appears that soon after Crazy Horse had reached Spotted Tail agency, a courier arrived from Red Cloud with a message from Lieutenant Clark, to the effect that Crazy Horse's band had offered no opposition; they had surrendered their guns without any trouble at all, but that "Crazy Horse had skipped out for Spotted Tail agency." Clark requested that Chief Spotted Tail have Crazy Horse arrested and he (Clark) would send over fifteen or twenty Indian scouts to escort the runaway chief back to Red Cloud. It was afterward known to be a fact that the scouts overtook Crazy Horse as he was riding leisurely along with his sick wife, and that when the scouts demanded that he accompany them back to Red Cloud, the chief drew himself up proudly and haughtily retorted: "*I am Crazy Horse! Don't touch me! I'm not running away!*" The awed scouts did not dare enforce their orders.

In Major Burke's office, Crazy Horse was assured that no harm should come to him; that there was no reason for any such apprehension—which the chief seemed to fear—whereupon he promised to return next day to Red Cloud. It was expected, and thought likely, that, if the chief could be conducted back to Red Cloud quietly, he would be granted an opportunity to talk with the authorities regarding his desire to come and live at Spotted Tail agency. Crazy Horse

stated that he simply wanted to get away from trouble; that he had brought his sick wife to be treated and that he had come there for that specific purpose.

Agent Lee replied that he would remember what the chief had said and would repeat his words to the authorities at Camp Robinson the following day. Crazy Horse was thereupon turned over to several Indian chiefs for the night, they agreeing, under a binding Indian pledge to be responsible for his safe-keeping and reporting to Major Burke in the morning.

At the appointed time the following morning, Crazy Horse reported at the office, but said he had changed his mind about going back to Red Cloud, giving as his reason that he "was afraid something might happen." He asked Lee and Major Burke to go down to Red Cloud without him, and arrange matters satisfactorily. Crazy Horse was thereupon assured that he need have no fear about returning; that he owed it to his people to do so, and must return. The chief finally consented, with the understanding that neither himself nor Agent Lee should take arms; that Lee should state to the authorities at Red Cloud all that had occurred at Spotted Tail agency, and that if Crazy Horse made a statement of facts, Lee was to say to the Soldier Chief that Major Burke, Spotted Tail and himself were willing to receive him, by transfer, from Red Cloud, if the District Commander so ordered, and further, that Crazy Horse be permitted to state what had occurred—how he had been misunderstood and misinterpreted; that he wanted peace and quiet and did not want to have any trouble of any sort.

No promise was made to the chief that he would be transferred from Red Cloud to Spotted Tail agency, as both he and Agent Lee well knew this could only be done by a higher authority.

The start for Red Cloud was made on the morning of September 5th, Crazy Horse being allowed to ride on horse-

back. In the ambulance rode Louis Bordeaux, the interpreter, Black Crow and Swift Bear, two reliable agency chiefs, and High Bear and Touch-the-Clouds, Crazy Horse's friends. By consent, seven friends of Crazy Horse from among the northern Indians also went along. A few "reliables" rode with Crazy Horse to care for him and prevent any attempted escape.

During this ride, Crazy Horse dashed ahead a few moments and disappeared over the brow of a hill a hundred yards away. It is likely that here he obtained the knife which later figured in his last dramatic moments. When overtaken, he stated that he had merely ridden ahead to water his horse. He was then made to ride directly in the rear of Agent Lee's ambulance. As the distance to Red Cloud decreased, the chief appeared extremely nervous and doubtful of the outcome, but was reassured that he need fear nothing.

When the party had arrived within fifteen miles of Red Cloud agency, Agent Lee sent a note to Lieutenant Clark by a swift Indian courier, asking if Crazy Horse should be taken to the post or the agency. It was stated in the message that great tact had been necessary in securing the chief without serious trouble, and that he had been promised he might state his own case. Clark was asked to arrange accordingly.

The courier returned with the information that Crazy Horse was to be taken direct to the office of General Bradley at Camp Robinson, but nothing was said about giving the chief a chance to state his case.

Agent Lee had built the post at Robinson, and knew the office of the commanding officer was next to the guardhouse, and it at once came into his mind that Crazy Horse was to be imprisoned. When the party reached the post, Lee was informed by the adjutant that the general had directed that Crazy Horse was to be turned over to the officer of the day.

Lee objected to this arrangement, stating that he desired Crazy Horse to see the commanding officer before anything else was done. This request was referred to the general himself. Lee entered his office, but was brusquely, and in a few brief words, informed that " 'Twas no use; orders were orders; he could not change them, nor could General Crook himself; nothing further need be said; Crazy Horse must be turned over to the officer of the day." To the inquiry: "Can Crazy Horse be heard in the morning?" the general made no reply, saying that "Crazy Horse must be delivered to the officer of the day *and not a hair of his head shall be harmed.*"

Seeing that further pleading was useless, Lee returned to the office, where Crazy Horse was informed that "night was coming on, and the Soldier Chief said it was too late for a talk; that he said for him to go with the officer of the day and he would be taken care of, and 'not a hair of his head should be harmed.' "

Crazy Horse thereupon shook hands warmly with Captain Kennington, the officer of the day. Lee took Touch-the-Clouds and High Bear, friends of the chief, aside and explained to them how he was powerless and subject to higher authorities at that post.

The chief made no objections whatever to following Captain Kennington. They stepped out of the office, followed by two soldiers of the guard. Kennington led the way to the guardhouse and all passed in through the main door. But here Crazy Horse caught a glimpse of the prison room beyond, the barred windows, the grated doors and the dungeon cells. Never before had his proud spirit been subjected to this sort of humiliation, and it is unquestionably true that into his mind immediately came the thought that he had been duped, tricked, lied to and trapped. Turning like a hunted animal at bay, Crazy Horse, sprang with the agility of a panther into the main guard room, where he

drew a long, glittering knife from a hiding place in his clothing, and attempted to stab Captain Kennington. The latter diverted the blade upon his sword, whereupon Crazy Horse sprang outside, fighting and striking right and left among the guard, struggling to make his way where his Indian friends were standing.

The chief was seized by Little Big Man, a warrior comrade of Crazy Horse, who attempted to force him to the ground. The infuriated chieftain drew the blade across Little Big Man's wrist to free him from the treacherous grasp, then attacked a soldier of the guard. Three of the Brules caught and held him, and in the struggle Kennington shouted, "*Kill him! kill him!*" An infantry soldier of the guard thereupon made a lunge with a bayonet, and Crazy Horse fell, mortally wounded, with a deep bayonet thrust in his right side.

The wildest confusion reigned. Crazy Horse's seven friends were barely prevented from firing upon the guard. Bugles blared and troops came rushing out, while the populous Indian camp poured hundreds of excited, maddened warriors to the scene. Even the Indian enemies of Crazy Horse were highly wrought up over the dastardly murder. It was an inexcusable, deliberately planned attempt to "get Crazy Horse out of the way."

The dying chieftain was immediately carried into the office which he had just left a few moments before. Touch-the-Clouds, his firm friend, asked permission to remain with him. The request was granted on condition that he give up his gun, to which he replied with bitter sarcasm: "*You are many; I am only one. You may not trust me, but I will trust you! You can take my gun!*" The chief's old father and mother were also allowed to remain with him.

About 10 p. m., Crazy Horse sent word that he wished to see Agent Lee before he died. Lee went to his side. The chieftain was lying on his blanket on the floor. Grasping



Lee's proffered hand, he gasped between his dying moans: "My friend, I do not blame you for this. Had I listened to you, this trouble would not have happened to me." Before the end came, Crazy Horse said: "I was not hostile to the white man. Sometimes my young men would attack the Indians who were their enemies and took their ponies. They did it in return. We had buffalo for food, and their hides for clothing and our tepees. We preferred hunting to a life of idleness on the reservations, where we were driven against our will (at this time steps had not been taken to teach them farming). At times we did not get enough to eat, and we were not allowed to leave the reservation to hunt. We preferred our own way of living. We were at no expense to the Government then. All we wanted was peace, and to be let alone. Soldiers were sent out in the winter, who destroyed our villages. (He referred to the winter before when his village was destroyed by Colonel Reynolds, 3d Cavalry.) Then 'Long Hair' (Custer) came in the same way. They say we massacred him, but he would have done the same to us had we not defended ourselves and fought to the last. Our first impulse was to escape with our squaws and papooses, but we were so hemmed in that we had to fight. After that I went up on Tongue river with a few of my people and lived in peace. But the Government would not let me alone. Finally I came back to Red Cloud agency. Yet I was not allowed to remain quiet. I was tired of fighting. I went to Spotted Tail agency and asked that chief and his agent to let me live there in peace. I came here with the agent (Lee) to talk with the big white chief, but was not given a chance. They tried to confine me. I tried to escape and a soldier ran his bayonet into me. I have spoken." And then in a weak, tremulous voice, Crazy Horse broke out into the weird and now famous death song of the Sioux.

Crazy Horse died about midnight, and with his passing went one of the bravest, gamest, most strategic Indian gen-

erals of all frontier history in America—a red man who could not and would not be reconstructed. Touch-the-Clouds folded the dead chief's hands on his breast, and reverently said, "It is good. He has looked for death and it has come."

The old gray-haired father of Crazy Horse begged that he might take the body away and give it an Indian burial. Consent was given, and at daylight on the morning of September 6, 1877, the wailing, pathetic old father and mother followed on foot from the post an Indian travois, to which was lashed the body of their renowned son and protector. The offer of an ambulance was declined. They desired to convey the body to its burial-place in the manner they knew Crazy Horse would have desired, could he have been consulted in the premises. It was a pathetic scene, not soon forgotten by those who witnessed it.

The real reason for attempting to confine Crazy Horse in the guardhouse was not made public for many years. However, a captain of the Third Cavalry stated that his troop was detailed to take the chief from the guardhouse at midnight, rush him rapidly to the railroad, and convey him by train to the Dry Tortugas, Florida, far away from all his family and friends, doubtless for the balance of his days. General Bradley had received this mandatory order from the "higher-ups" at Washington, and of course was compelled to abide by them. Had Frank Grouard not misinterpreted Touch-the-Clouds' and Crazy Horse's words, doubtless the whole tragic, lamentable affair would have been averted.

## CHAPTER XLIII

### AFTER THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS



AFTER our trip to the Custer battlefield and Fort Custer, we went back to the Clear Fork of Powder river, expecting to remain for some time. We were there only a few days, however, when we were ordered out to intercept the hostile Nez Perce (pierced nose) Indians. We passed through Pryor Gap, one of the passes of the Big Horn mountains. Gen. O. O. Howard had been on the trail of these Indians several weeks. Other troops were ordered out to try and intercept them. Colonel Sturgis, with the Seventh Cavalry, was one of the commanders. Our expedition was composed of Troops B, H, I and L, Fifth Cavalry, commanded by Capt. Montgomery Hamilton Kellogg and Lieutenant Rockwell, respectively, twenty-five scouts and Frank Grouard, a half-breed Kanaka, who had lived many years among the Indians.\* Major V. K. Hart, formerly of the Seventh Cavalry, who was with Major Reno's command at the battle of the Little Big Horn, also accompanied us.

On the Stinking Water, Gen. Wesley Merritt joined us with the remainder of the regiment (save G Troop, which was stationed at Fort Washakie) and 100 Shoshone scouts in charge of Lieut. Hoel S. Bishop. Stinking Water was

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\*Frank Grouard was born in the South Sea islands. His father was a white man and his mother a native of the islands. Frank was brought to this country when a small boy. At the age of 19, while acting as mail carrier between Forts Hall and Peck, Montana, he was captured by the forces of Sitting Bull. Because of his dark complexion, it was thought they had captured an Indian of some strange tribe. Frank said that when he was captured, he was wearing a heavy buffalo-skin overcoat. It was tied with strings around the wrists to keep out the cold. The Indians wanted to get the coat off uninjured before killing him, and some of them were trying to untie the strings. Suddenly Sitting Bull himself appeared, knocking the Indians right and left, and personally took possession of the captive. He took Grouard to the Sioux village and kept him a captive for several years, during which time Grouard familiarized himself with the Sioux

the name given the river owing to the strong odor of coal-oil, which we scented long before reaching the stream.

When we arrived at the river, the command was dismounted, while Colonel Hart and Lieutenant Andrus, his adjutant, were looking for a crossing. In the meantime I removed one of my boots, and was about to put it on, when there was a cry of "Indians!" Jumping up, I saw a dozen or more coming down the valley at a rapid gallop. I was somewhat excited (there were others). Not stopping to put on my boot, I gave the command to mount (nervy for a junior lieutenant). The order was promptly obeyed, when we discovered that Lieut. Charles King\*, our regimental adjutant, and Lieutenant Bishop were with the Indians. I must admit that I was frightened when the alarm was given, and was ashamed of it, as I was supposed to be an old Indian fighter. On looking around me I saw two or more officers (First Sergeant Turpin and Sergeant Deary, both medal of honor men) looking about as pale as myself, so I felt a little better.

This was a hard trip, as we were having considerable rain, and for several days we did not have a stitch of dry clothing on. We had only one mule on which to pack a month's rations for two officers, and their bedding. Lieutenant Rockwell and I fared better than the other officers. As I had the only extra animal in the command (named Crazy Horse) I packed him with my portable mess chest. It contained dishes and cooking utensils sufficient for three

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tongue, and, to all intents and purposes, became one of the tribe, taking part in many of their battles against other Indian tribes. However, he did not intend to remain forever a captive, but was merely biding his time to make his escape. This he effected just before the Indian war of 1876, and immediately applied for work as a scout under General Crook. He did valuable work, his familiarity of Indian life being turned to good account. Crook is reported to have once said, "I would rather lose a third of my command than Frank Grouard." For several years after the Indian troubles, Grouard was stationed at Fort McKinney, Wyoming, in the employ of the government as interpreter. He died at St. Joseph, Mo., several years ago, where he was undergoing treatment for failing eyesight.

\*Retired as Captain because of wounds, June 14, 1879. Brigadier general in Spanish War. Author of over 50 novels of Western life.

officers. I also had a camp stove, a small tent and a 'paulin. I had provided myself with this outfit for just such occasions. On reaching camp, my colored boy (Clay) would very quickly put up shelter for the kitchen and have a good fire burning. He would put dry stove wood into the oven before leaving camp, so we were sure of having a fire if our pack animal did not fail us. It would not be long before the officers would be coming around for hot coffee, having smelled the aroma. I finally had to ask them to bring coffee with them to replace ours.

We did not intercept the Indians. On our return, our scouts found the Nez Perces' trail, and thought General Sturgis was following it, as they found a dead Seventh Cavalry horse and two or three Indian ponies. It was a fortunate thing that we did not meet the Indians. They would have outnumbered us greatly, were desperate fighters and well armed.

Shortly before this, they had repulsed Col. John Gibbon, Seventh Infantry, in the fight at the Big Hole, Montana, killing and wounding quite a number of officers and men.\* The colonel was shot through the thigh. Colonel Mason, who was a member of General Howard's staff when he was pursuing Chief Joseph, told me that he (Joseph) showed remarkable generalship. He was quick to observe and prompt to take advantage of everything that favored or strengthened his position. When he came into camp at night, he would throw up formidable defenses. The only way to drive the Indians out without great loss of life, was to outflank them. We had several packers whose homes were in the Gallatin Valley, Mont. They told me that just before the Nez Perces commenced hostilities, Joseph sent word to the settlers not to leave their homes; that he would not harm them; that he was only going to fight the soldiers. I have been told that he kept his word faithfully, both as

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\*Col. Gibson reported his loss in the Big Hole fight as 2 officers, 6 citizens and 21 enlisted men, killed; 5 officers, 4 citizens and 31 men wounded.







Photo by E. A. Brininstool, Sept., 1913, on Custer Battlefield.

"Curley," one of Custer's Crow Indian Scouts, and Reputed Sole Survivor  
of the Battle of the Little Big Horn.

regards fighting the troops and not harming the Gallatin Valley settlers.

These Indians had been forced to leave their lands and go on an unproductive reservation against their will. For years they had been friends of the Government and the white men. They were self-sustaining and rich in cattle and horses. Who would not fight under such conditions? These Indians afterward surrendered to Gen. Nelson A. Miles, with the understanding that they would not be sent to the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), but this promise was not kept.

They were held as prisoners of war for a long time at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and from there were sent to Fort Sill, I. T. This was a very unhealthy country at that time, noted for its chills and fever. The Nez Perces commenced to sicken and die off. It was thought at the time that the Indian Department sent them to that sickly climate, taking that means of getting rid of them, and from all that I can gather, they succeeded admirably. General McNeal, Indian Commissioner, told me at Fort Washakie, that he was sent to Fort Leavenworth to take charge of the Nez Perces and make arrangements to transport them to the Territory. He found they had been promised they would not be sent there. They begged and pleaded not to be made to go, and asked him to intercede for them. He communicated with the Interior Department, stating all the facts in the premises, but the authorities would not rescind the order. The Nez Perces must go. The general felt so badly for these poor people that he did not have the heart to move them, and asked to be relieved and was sent elsewhere, and another man was sent to remove them. It was not until 1885 that the Nez Perces were sent back to their beloved mountain home, where Chief Joseph died September 22, 1904, practically of a broken heart.

After this expedition we returned to Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming, via Fort Washakie, the Sweetwater, Laramie and the Chugwater.

## CHAPTER XLIV

### A SCOUT FOR INDIANS AT FORT McPHERSON, NEBRASKA



WHILE stationed at Fort McPherson, Nebraska, the winter of 1877-78, our commanding officer, Col. Eugene A. Carr, Fifth Cavalry, was notified that a band of Indians was raiding the cattle ranches north of us. I was ordered to take a detachment of men and investigate the matter, and if I found the report true, to make an effort to capture the Indians without bloodshed, if possible. If not able to do so, I was to take such action in the premises as I thought best.

I left the post about 6 p. m. one day with a detachment of about forty men from Troop H, Fifth Cavalry, with pack animals and several days' rations, for North Platte, eighteen miles from McPherson, where I wanted to get information regarding the Indians who were supposed to be committing the depredations. I arrived at North Platte about 9 o'clock. There were rumors afloat in the air, but nobody seemed to know where the Indians were operating.

After some difficulty I found Dave Perry, a noted character, who informed me that the Indians had raided Barton and Keith's ranch, about forty miles distant, running off some of their horses, so I decided to go there. I had never been in that part of the country, and Perry volunteered to accompany us as guide. I saddled up and left for the ranch at daylight, arriving there about 11 o'clock. I found about twenty cowmen at the ranch. None of them had seen the Indians, but they were quite sure they were in the country. Con Groner, county sheriff, was among the party, and doing most of the talking. He was spokesman for the cowmen. Afterwards he was with a Wild West show as the cowboy

sheriff, and a noted Indian fighter. It was on this occasion he made his reputation.

I was informed that the cattlemen would work with me and do whatever I thought best in the matter. I told Groner to take his men and try to locate the Indians' trail, and if they found it, to wait until I came up and we would follow it. I wanted to feed my horses and give my men something to eat, so that in case they found the trail I would be in a position to follow it without delay, to the Indian reservation, if necessary. I carefully instructed the cattlemen if they located the trail not to follow it until I joined them.

As soon as my horses had eaten their grain and the troopers had lunch, I saddled up and moved out to join the cowmen. In a few hours I overtook them, and to my great surprise they had found the Indians and fired upon them, the Indians escaping. I was greatly wrought up over their actions, and remarked that it was a "pretty howdy-do." I said, "If you had obeyed my instructions, those Indians would not have gotten away."

They made some frivolous excuse and looked rather crestfallen. There were less than a dozen Indians, I learned, and only three or four were mounted. When the cowmen approached the Indians they were putting up some wickiups, and no doubt were preparing to remain all night.

I told the cowmen I was going to make an effort to capture the Indians, and that they had better go home. This was nearly at nightfall, and the Indians had scattered so that it was impossible to follow them very rapidly. Some of the cattlemen followed on after me. It was soon so dark that we could not distinguish the trail. We were satisfied by this time that the Indians were making for their reservation. In places there was some snow on the ground, so we could see that those who were afoot were making "some strides." I learned that the cattle ranch of Buffalo Bill Cody and Major Frank North was on the Dismal (the next stream).



I told the cattlemen that I would make for the ranch, as it was on the direct route that the Indians were taking for their reservation. Here the cattlemen left me.

I arrived at the Cody ranch about 1 o'clock a. m. The ranchmen were up and halted me. They told me that some Indians came to the ranch about 11 o'clock. Hearing a noise out at the corral, the men got up to ascertain the trouble, and saw the Indians as they fled. No doubt they were trying to steal some horses. I knew there was little use following the Indians further at that time of night, so unsaddled, feeding my horses some hay, and told my men to make themselves as comfortable as they could, and we would move out again at daybreak.

We started out bright and early. My men had had their coffee and my horses some rest, so I was prepared to follow the Indians speedily. I had no trouble in following their trail, for there was considerable snow on the ground. I went to Rankin's ranch, which was a ride of about 35 miles, arriving there about 11 o'clock. I learned that the Indians had been there about 7 o'clock, pretty well fagged out, and the ranchmen had given them something to eat. They told the ranchmen that the soldiers were after them. The Indians were very tired. No doubt they had relieved each other with their ponies.

As the reservation was not many miles from the ranch, and as I was convinced the Indians had committed no depredations, I gave up the pursuit. On sober thought, I was glad that the Indians had gotten away from the cattlemen, for had I overtaken them at that time, when the excitement was on, I might have killed some of them.

I returned to McPherson by easy marches. I was in the saddle about twenty hours, and the distance marched was fully 100 miles.

## CHAPTER XLV

### EXPERIENCES AT FORT WASHAKIE



IN DECEMBER, 1878, my troop was ordered to Fort Washakie, Wyoming. The post was located on the Little Wind river, Shoshone reservation, 160 miles from the railroad. I remained there until June, 1880. Green River was the nearest railroad station.

While stationed there I was the quartermaster, commissary, ordnance officer, post treasury officer and in command of my troop part of the time. I partially rebuilt the post, erecting a large storehouse, guardhouse, stables and an administration building, which included an officers' club room—which the enlisted men could also enjoy—bowling alley and a chapel, which was provided with a stage for amusements. Most of the work was done by soldier labor. The men went into the mountains, felled the trees and hauled the logs to the sawmill, which was provided with a planing and shingle mill. I employed a citizen sawyer and a carpenter. These were all the civilians employed, excepting the blacksmith and a few teamsters.

While in charge of the bakery, I purchased flour from a little mill near Lander City, made the flour up into bread and sold it to the Indians. Taking some of this money, I sent to Salt Lake City for a hundred trees and set them out around the parade ground. Today they are immense trees. I had to send the adjutant-general a quarterly report of the finances of the bakery. My tree transaction was disapproved. I was informed that the Government did not approve of that kind of business, and directed not to do it again. I didn't care. I got the trees. Had I been per-

mitted to continue that kind of work, I would have made other improvements to add to the appearance of the post.

I took great interest in these Indians. They called me "the little chief with the scar on his face." I put in the first irrigation ditch for the Arapahoes. Gen. Jesse M. Lee told me, while in the Philippines that the Indians had informed him, when he was at Fort Washakie investigating some of the Indian grievances, that I was the one who surveyed and showed them how to make the ditch. This was their first farming, and if the Government had taken the interest in them that I did, they would now be self-sustaining.

I inspected all the fresh beef and cattle issued. The issue day was every Saturday morning. I went over to the agency, superintended the weighing of the meat issued, and had to certify to the weight, and see that it was up to the contract. This certificate was sent to the Indian Department at Washington. I inspected and received for these Indians about 3,000 head of stock cattle. They were divided among the families.

One day I was riding around the reservation, and upon passing a thicket, I happened to see an Indian therein, branding two or three calves. I asked him what he was doing. Pointing to the brand, he replied, laughingly: "Oh, me branding, all same white man." It looked to me very much as if he were branding mavericks. There were several large herds grazing on the reservation.

While at Fort Washakie, I took baths in an Indian sweat-house. This was a small bower, constructed by sticking the ends of sharpened willow branches in the ground, then bending them over and fastening them together at the top, over which buffalo robes were thrown. The bower was about eight or ten feet long and six feet wide, and the height was such that when a person sat down, his head would nearly touch the top. A hole was dug in the center of the bower in which to place stones that had been previously

heated. These stones were carefully selected, were as nearly round as possible, and never used more than once for this purpose.

Lieutenant Cummings and myself decided that we would try one of these baths. It was in the month of January, with snow on the ground. Dry grass was first placed inside the sweat-lodge for us to sit on. We stripped and went inside, with four or five of the Indians, the medicine-man coming last. The hot stones were passed in on a forked stick, and put into a hole in the center; then a bucket of water was handed in. The medicine-man now placed on the hot stones some sweet grass, which emitted a fragrant odor. He then commenced to sing incantations. Finally, taking a cup of water from the bucket, he filled his mouth and sprayed it over the hot stones, which filled the place with a dense steam and made it very warm. The thermometer we had with us showed a temperature in the bower of 120 degrees. It became so hot that we had to put our faces down in the grass, in order to breathe. After a thorough sweating, we came out of the bower dripping with perspiration, threw buffalo robes over ourselves, ran down to the stream (Little Wind River) about fifty or seventy-five yards away, and jumped in. We did not remain very long in the water, but the sensation was pleasant. Then we went back to a tepee and thoroughly rubbed ourselves down. I never felt better in my life.

The post surgeon wanted to try one of the baths, and went down to the Arapahoe camp with us. Before entering the sweat-lodge we told him he must keep his head up, let come what might. We had been in the bath but a short time when the surgeon commenced to perspire. He told us he could not stand the excessive heat much longer. Cummings and I had our faces down in the grass, where we could stand the heat very well. First one would bob up, then the other, asking the doctor "how he was making out." He stood it

as long as he could, then made a break, remarking that it "was the damndest hottest place he ever was in," as he bolted through the side of the sweat-lodge.

During my stay at the post, Sharp Nose, the head chief of the Arapahoes, fractured his thigh. The commanding officer sent me down to tell him that if he chose to come up to the post, he would put him in the hospital, but that his family must not accompany him. When I arrived at the Indian camp, I found the Indian doctors attending him. They had made a splint by taking many willow twigs, about as large around as a lead pencil, and stringing them in the same way the Chinese and Japanese make their screens. They had set the leg and wrapped these willow twigs around it, and had made a strong tea out of sago and occasionally sprayed the concoction on the limb. This relieved a great deal of the inflammation and soreness. All this time there were about a half dozen Indian doctors in attendance, beating tom-toms and blowing their whistles. The music was about as confusing and noisy as Chinese music. Nevertheless, Sharp Nose duly recovered, although his leg was about an inch shorter than the other. Indian doctors also "cup" for headaches and other complaints, by using the base end of a buffalo horn.

During the spring of 1879, I captured the roving remnants of the Bannock Indians at the end of hostilities with that tribe. There were about forty men, women and children. I had to use some diplomacy in capturing them without loss of life.

I had been informed that these Indians were about forty miles away from the post, and started out after them with Troop L, 5th Cavalry, leaving the post about two or three o'clock in the afternoon. I also had about a dozen Shoshones and Arapahoes. We reached the Bannocks' camp about daylight and surrounded it. I then sent word by a scout to inform them that we were all around them and that



they must surrender. After some little talking they decided to accompany me. I told them no harm should be done to them, and that we had other prisoners at the post. I ordered them to make preparations to break camp and go with me. Some of my own Indians were much excited, and I could hardly keep them from firing into these people, but I started back to camp and that night I put my men on guard over both the Bannocks and the turbulent scouts, keeping this guard over them until I arrived back at the post.

One of the greatest Indian chiefs of modern times was Washakie, chief of the Shoshones, after whom Fort Washakie received its name. He was born about 1804, and died at Fort Washakie, February 20, 1900. His father was a Flathead and his mother a Shoshone. Washakie became chief at nineteen or twenty years of age, but was not distinguished or well known until 1863, after General Connor's defeat of the Shoshones and Bannocks on Bear River, Utah, January 29, 1863.

In this fight there were about three hundred Indians engaged. Col. P. C. Connor's command numbered about the same—all California volunteers of cavalry and infantry—with two howitzers. The Indians were strongly entrenched in a deep ravine, and Connor had much difficulty in getting to them. The obstacles were finally overcome, however, and the soldiers killed all but a few Indians, who jumped the river and escaped. Many were killed in the stream while attempting to swim across. Only the women and children were spared. One officer and twenty soldiers were killed and three officers and forty-four men were wounded.

For this victory over the Indians, Col. Connor was promoted to a brigadier-generalship. The Mormons sided with the Indians and gave them aid and encouragement, supplying them with food and ammunition and information of the soldiers' movements. The campaign was the outcome of

depredations on the Overland Trail and the killing of emigrants and miners.

After this fight a much larger number of Indians congregated on Bear River, but Washakie, after much persuasion and entreaty, finally induced many of the young warriors to withdraw, and he then led them into Fort Bridger, Utah. From this on, he was absolutely chief.

A treaty, called the "Great Treaty," was made with the Shoshones and Bannocks in 1868. By the terms of this treaty, these tribes were given the Wind River country for a reservation. It was understood that the treaty should provide military protection for the Shoshones in the country they were to occupy, but for some reason this was not inserted in the treaty. To my knowledge the Indian Department wanted the soldiers removed from the reservation on several occasions, but Chief Washakie insisted upon their remaining, asserting that they were his friends, and that he could rely on their friendship and protection. Although not actually inserted in the treaty, it was intended to be a part thereof. In after years, however, this stipulation was canceled by the War Department.\*

Throughout his life, Washakie was the steadfast friend of the white man, but was almost constantly at war against other Indian tribes, the Sioux, Cheyennes and Arapahoes in particular. He was generally on the defensive, as the tribes mentioned were much stronger than his own. It is not known that he was ever defeated, although at times closely pressed and besieged.

Red Cloud and Crazy Horse admitted that Washakie was the greatest general of them all. He took part in the campaign of 1876, with Gen. Crook, tendering the latter scores of his young men for use as scouts with the expedition, and they rendered valuable service. They were under the

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\*I am indebted to my old friend, J. K. Moore, for many years post trader at Fort Washakie, for this information.

charge of Tom Cosgrove, Chief Washakie being too old himself to take an active part in the campaign.

Washakie was a great leader and always had complete control of his people. The latter part of his life was spent in the quiet enjoyment of his people and surroundings. He was a man of excellent character, and endeavored to exercise a good influence over his people. He was extremely fond of his family and enjoyed the peaceful life. A story often told as well as written, that he killed one of his wives, is an error. His disposition was most kindly. He was dignified and commanded the respect of all.

Washakie was known to all the early pioneers and pathfinders, whose friendship they sought. Kit Carson appears to have been his favorite. No Indian of mountain or plain was more extensively and favorably known.

His remains rest in the post cemetery at Fort Washakie, where a monument, erected by the United States Government, stands to his memory.

## CHAPTER XLVI

### ISSUING ANNUITY GOODS



IN THE issuing of annuity goods, the Indians were arranged in two parties. On one side were the women with small children who were unable to leave their mothers. In the next row were girls from eight to fifteen years of age. In the third row were the old women. The men were placed on the opposite side—the young men in the inner and the older men in the outer circle. Head men were selected who issued the articles by placing each allotment in front of the person for whom it was intended, and all were obliged to remain in their places until the distributions were completed. The women had to be watched closely, for occasionally they would attempt to secrete things, and then claim they had not received them.

The Indians were always much pleased at receiving their annuities, and the fact that I was in charge of the issues, caused one of them to present me with a horse—or rather, with a stick that represented the value of a horse, for all I had to do was to hold on to the stick, go to the herd, select the best horse there, and then surrender the stick. I did not know this at the time.

After this presentation, two of the chiefs led me out into the center of the ring, and from the opposite side a man led out a beautiful Indian maiden, magnificently dressed in Indian costume, wearing a handsome buckskin garment covered with beads and elk teeth. Thirty or forty of the teeth ornamented the tunic, and in those days they were valued at from \$2 to \$3 each. The moccasins of the maiden also were covered with beads, and her arms were thickly encircled with silver bracelets. Her costume must have been worth

\$150 to \$200. Her face was painted in such a manner that it greatly enhanced her natural beauty.

As she was being led out, several queries ran through my mind. As it was the custom among the Indians, when they were pleased, to give their friends their daughters, I thought this might be what they intended to do, and of course I could not accept her. Really, I did not know what to do. They led her up, and she stretched her arms toward me and I thought she was about to throw them about me and kiss me. I thereupon dodged back, throwing up my hands, one of which held the stick I had intended to present for the horse, when she quickly grabbed the stick from my hand and gleefully ran away with it. The whole multitude of some two or three thousand Indians commenced laughing uproariously.

At the time I did not understand the cause of their mirth, but I was told by "Friday," the interpreter, that it was the custom in cases of this kind to give the officer in charge of the distribution the blessing of the tribe. The young woman had come out to confer this blessing upon me, and merely extended her arms with the intention of placing them on my head and pronouncing a benediction; but when she grabbed the stick, as I dodged, the horse became hers—so I got neither horse nor blessing!

As in other nationalities, the Indians have their love affairs, and it is an old custom among them to sell their daughters in marriage when they reach the proper age. There was a girl who had been sold when she was a child, to another Indian, but she had fallen in love with a young warrior, and they ran away, returning as man and wife. One issue day they were going up for rations, when the Indian who had purchased the girl, struck the young "warrior-Lochinvar" with a whip. The youthful groom killed his assailant on the spot, and then fled to the mountains with his wife, telling his enemies if they wanted him to come and get



him. This caused a great commotion among the different bands of Indians, and it looked as though there was going to be serious trouble.. The Indians went to the commanding officer, Major John Upham, 5th Cavalry, who had great influence over them, and asked for advice. He suggested that they send two or three old men, who were friends of the warrior, out to him, and try to prevail on him to accompany them in to the post with his wife—not as prisoners; that the commanding officer would put them into a room in the guardhouse, and keep them there where they would be safe from their enemies. The head men would then try to get the two factions together and see if they could not settle the matter with the dead man's relatives without further bloodshed.

One morning about daybreak, I was awakened by a noise, and looking out, saw the young warrior and his wife surrounded by about a dozen Indians, who were singing a war song, a custom of theirs when they effect a capture. I was officer of the day and confined the couple in the guardhouse. They had a very fine buffalo robe—one of the finest I ever saw—and while in the guardhouse, this young squaw occupied herself in decorating the robe with colored porcupine-quills. Around the edges were loops about three inches in length, on which were strung the cleft hoofs of more than one hundred deer.

Our Indians got together and had a council with the relatives of the prisoners, and the matter was finally settled by the friends of the young warrior presenting ten ponies to the relatives of the murdered man. When the young couple were released from the guardhouse, I again happened to be officer of the day and released them, whereupon the squaw made me a present of the decorated buffalo robe. I was offered \$100 for it on several occasions.


At one time I had probably one of the largest individual collections of Indian curios in the world. They were depos-

ited for several years in the museum on Governor's Island, New York harbor. They were also on exhibition in Glasgow, Scotland, and in London. At Governor's Island the collection was not properly cared for, and the valuable furs and clothing so ruined by moths that there was not a single hair left on my prized buffalo robe. Another robe captured by Col. Cody in the fight at Summit Springs, Nebraska, July 11, 1869, and which he gave me later, was also ruined. This robe was covered with paintings, evidently the life history of some Indian. I also had a memorandum book captured by my first sergeant, James Turpin, Troop L, Fifth Cavalry, in the fight with Dull Knife's Cheyennes in the Big Horn Mountains, in the winter of 1876.

I sold this collection of Indian curios to a French artist who had a studio in New York. He broke up his studio and sent the curios to France, together with his wife and child. All were lost enroute by the sinking of the French steamer, "La Bourgoyne" off the coast of Newfoundland, in 1898.

## CHAPTER XLVII

### WESTERN "BAD MEN"

HE typical "bad man" of the West is not a tough, although he has killed his man. It is hard for Eastern people to understand the environment that produced the Western "bad man" in perfection. In the settlement of the West, many small towns sprang up, their nucleus being a trading-store usually where ammunition, flour, clothing, bacon, candles and bad whiskey could be secured at ruinous rates to the consumer.

After the store had become established, a gambling-hell soon became its neighbor, if, in fact, it was not a more or less thinly-disguised adjunct of the store. Here the stage-coach discharged its passengers or stopped for meals, and the occupants who had survived the ride, could take fresh chances for their lives with tough meat fried in grease, and saleratus biscuits a month old, at a dollar a meal. The proprietor of the store, his clerks, the faro dealers and professional gamblers, formed the bulk of the permanent population.

The honest miners, ranchmen and cowboys were in the hills or on the prairie, attending to their respective callings, and only came to the "city" for supplies, a desire for a change of scene, to "spree" or for a general "hurrah."

Where all men go armed, politeness is very general, and everyone is courteous and respectful of the rights of others, and although everyone always carried a six-shooter, one might have lived in the toughest of Western towns for many years without having any use for a gun, but when one was wanted, it was wanted mighty bad!

The man who acquired a reputation for being a "bad man" in such a locality, generally secured the notoriety by

having it thrust upon him. No man ever lived very long with that reputation without having many sterling qualities. He had to be a good deal of a success or someone would "wipe him out," as they expressively said in the West in those days. He was a man slow to quarrel, and one who avoided all trouble until it was actually forced upon him. Then he was quick to "draw" and quicker to shoot—and in the early days, a man never drew his gun until he intended to kill, and kill quickly. It was the unwritten law of the West that a man who made a motion to draw his gun, was at the mercy of his opponent if the latter could "get the drop" on him. You will, therefore, see that it very soon grew unfashionable to carry one's handkerchief in the hip pocket. It was likely to give a wrong impression.

Men will not allow wanton murder in any country, and in killing his man, the "bad man" had to be sustained by public opinion. A reckless murderer would soon be assassinated or lynched, no matter how much he was feared. If you killed your man, even in what was considered fair fighting, you still had to consider the enmity of his friends.

It was this carelessness which led to the death of Wild Bill Hickok. Bad men were usually the killers of bullies and criminals, and they generally performed good service to the country at large, in ridding it of dangerous people. The wild cowboy, who got drunk on the vilest of whiskey, was of another type entirely. It was his delight to ride into bar rooms, shoot out the lights and dash madly through the street, shooting in the air and yelling that "he was a wolf and it was his night to howl." But he was often regarded only as an object of amusement. Of course he created a wild sort of excitement, but, as a matter of fact, he was perfectly harmless. But if a bully wantonly insulted and threatened inoffensive men, and tried to be "bad" and run the town, his shrift was a short one. He soon met his match and "died with his boots on." Moreover, his taking-off was approved by the community.

I recall an episode that occurred at Wallace, Kansas, many years ago. One day a large amount of bad whiskey had been consumed by the transient population, and a keg of nails had been emptied on the floor of the trading store. Two men seated themselves facing the pile, and were pulling nails, one at a time, with both hands. The man who picked up the last nail was "it," and had to buy the drinks for the crowd. There were many who were very much interested in this game of chance. Some of the bystanders amused themselves by dropping counterweights and other objects into the pile. Finally, a boy about nineteen years of age, playfully dropped a package of crackers and cheese among the nails. The owner of the parcel immediately fell into a rage, and rushed at the boy with upraised bowie knife. As he was about to strike, the boy shot him dead. It all took place so quickly that no one could interfere. The authorities investigated the shooting, and found that it was done in self-defense. Several "bad men" grew jealous of the boy's reputation, and he sent costly floral tributes to their funerals. This young man grew up with the country, and later became one of the prominent citizens.

The right of a man to also take the law into his own hands was also thoroughly recognized. At Fort Washakie, we had at one time, a post guide named McCabe. He was sent down to Rawlins, a station on the Union Pacific railroad, on Government business. One night he fell in with a tough, named Allison. The latter was drunk and abusive. McCabe was much the older man of the two, and Allison thought he could whip him with impunity, and proceeded to do it so thoroughly that there was no mistake about it. McCabe was brought home and was in the hospital for several weeks.

Some time after this, business again took him to Rawlins. He remarked to a friend of mine that if he met Allison in town, he would kill him. Allison had been staying at



Rawlins off and on, and as luck would have it, was there at the time. McCabe ran across him in a saloon, and walking up to Allison, asked if he knew him. "Certainly," rejoined Allison, "and if you want anything out of me, just turn yourself loose." As he said this he drew his gun. McCabe did not make a motion, apparently, but as Allison drew, McCabe shot him dead. The latter wore his gun thrust through his belt, where it was in plain sight, but he also had a short pistol in his overcoat pocket, and it was pointed straight at Allison when the latter drew his weapon.

A little incident about McCabe at this point, is interesting. Three notorious train robbers made their escape from the Laramie City penitentiary. One of them was called "The Kid" because of his extreme youth, and he was noted throughout Wyoming for his daring exploits. They were serving life-sentences for holding up and robbing a Union Pacific train, killing and wounding two or three train employes. The desperadoes overpowered the prison guard, killing one of them, securing their arms and making their escape. A heavy reward was offered for their capture, dead or alive. It seems that the bandits were making their way to the Jackson's Hole country, which was then well known as a rendezvous for outlaws. If the bandits once got into that country, they would be comparatively safe from capture.

Early one morning a man went to a milk ranch near the post (Fort Washakie) and wanted to buy some salt, stating that he was a prospector. He was a total stranger in that part of the country, and his actions aroused the suspicions of the ranch people, for they had just read the poster offering a large reward for the capture of some convicts who had recently escaped from the penitentiary. It also seemed rather strange for a man to call at a ranch for salt when the post trader's store was so near by. Had the men been content to have lived on fresh meat for a time, until they had reached the Jackson's Hole country, this story probably never would have been written.

A day or two later, McCabe, who was a deputy United States marshal, learned that the men had been at the milk ranch. He inquired of the Indians at the agency if they had seen any strange white men around, and learned that they had seen three men. McCabe got some Indians and began to look for the trail of the convicts, to see in which direction they were going. He found the trail shortly. The men were headed toward Grey Bull Lake, which was the only trail that would take them to Jackson's Hole.

McCabe came to me, and asked for three horses, stating the purpose for which he wanted them, and saying he hoped to get the reward by capturing the bandits, as he needed the money in his business. He had made arrangements for two Shoshone Indians to accompany him. He got the horses, although I had no right to loan Government animals.

He started out to follow the trail, and found two or three places where they had stopped to rest and get some sleep. He was quite sure they were the convicts, for they had no camp equipment nor horses. When McCabe got as near as possible to his quarry as he dared go without fear of detection (being able to judge their distance fairly well by the freshness of their footprints), he left the trail, and made a long detour to get ahead of the bandits and cut them off. He succeeded in his undertaking, and concealed his party in a thicket in a ravine through which the trail passed. Here he waited for the bandits to come up. They made their appearance quite early in the morning, coming along the trail carelessly, thinking, no doubt, that they were so far away there was no danger.

McCabe and his faithful Shoshones raised up, covering the bandits and demanding that they throw up their hands and be in a hurry about it. The desperadoes were so taken by surprise that they did not have time to make any defense. Their arms were taken from them, and the prisoners were taken in to the post and confined in the guardhouse. It was

hard work to guard their prisoners while enroute to the post. McCabe told me he did not get a wink of sleep for three days, as the capture was made at a distance of a hundred miles from the post. After a day or so of rest, McCabe and his two Indians took the prisoners to Laramie City by way of Green River Station, 160 miles from Fort Washakie, by stage, and turned them over to the prison authorities.

While they were confined in the guardhouse at the post, one of the three prisoners, a large man, was saying what he "was going to do" when they were first captured. The Kid suddenly said, "Well, why in hell didn't you do it, then? I have been listening to all of this talk and am tired of it, and if you don't shut up, I will beat your brains out with these shackles!" There was no further loud talk from that man.

McCabe not only secured the reward for the capture, but he and his men were highly commended for their good work. McCabe shortly after was given an important position in the territorial penitentiary.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

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### DETAILED TO GO TO RAWLINS FOR HORSES



IN 1881, I was detailed at the School of Application, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, when it first opened, rejoining my troops at Fort McKinney, Wyoming, in 1883.

I was stationed at Fort McKinney for several months. The post was named for Lieut. McKinney of the 4th Cavalry, who was killed in Mackenzie's fight with Dull Knife's band, November 25, 1876, on Powder River. This post has been abandoned several years. The town of Buffalo was established adjoining the military reservation while I was there, and is now one of the important towns in the state of Wyoming.

While at McKinney I had several important details, one of which was to proceed with a detachment of men to Rawlins, Wyoming, a station on the Union Pacific railroad, a distance of 175 miles or more, to receive 100 head of horses for my regiment and to conduct them safely to the post.

At that time the country was infested with horse and cattle thieves and stage robbers. Horses had even been stolen off picket lines during the night time, while a sentry was walking on the line. This was accomplished during dark and stormy nights. Great precaution had to be taken, therefore, to prevent animals being driven off during the night as well as day.

I was not expected to lead the horses (as is usually done), with a small detachment such as mine. I was to conduct the horses attached to a line, thereby saving the use of a large number of men. My detail was small, on account of the work on post and the number of men on detached ser-

vice. I suggested to the commanding officer the scheme of using a line, such as I had seen used when quite a lad during the Civil War. As I had remembered, a rope was run from the tongue of one wagon to the axle of another; but my scheme was to do away with the wagons and attach two teams to a line, the driver riding one of the horses. Of course it required more skill to manage a pair of horses in this way than it would to drive them to a wagon.

Before leaving the garrison, I provided myself with a coil of rope, some harness and the necessary equipment which I expected to use. On my way to Rawlins the only incident that occurred, was when one of my mules was taken with wind-colic. Having no drench, I bled the animal in the mouth, as I knew that in that ailment they were sometimes relieved by swallowing the blood; but in this case it did not help matters. The animal in great agony, laid down and refused to move. Not having a trocar, I punctured the mule with my knife, on the right side where the intestines were attached, which gave the animal immediate relief.

I found the horses awaiting my arrival, and at once made preparations to leave the next morning on the return trip, selecting suitable horses for my teams that were to be attached to the lines. The horses conducting the column had to be fastened to the rope by means of doubletrees, so I let out the tugs to the last hole, as a precaution against the doubletrees striking the horses' heels when the rope slackened. I prepared the harness for the teams that were to be attached to the other end of the line, by attaching straps to the collars, and to these straps the line was tied. These horses were supposed to hold back and keep the line taut, which was going to be very hard on their necks, and in order to protect them as much as possible, I ran straps from the breechings across the horses' backs, fastening them to the rings in the harness.

The next morning we were up bright and early. We harnessed up and hitched the horses to the line. I had two



lines, each of which was about 175 feet in length, and of course had to fasten one line at a time. During this operation everything ran smoothly, but when we commenced to tie the horses to the rope, our trouble commenced. The line was so long that the attached horses could not keep it off the ground, and no sooner would we get some of them secured than others would step over it, and hardly would we get the latter back in place when others would repeat the error. Several times four or five horses became tangled up, and we had to unravel the bunch. At times it looked as if I would have to abandon the scheme and ask for more men, but I kept that to myself, not wanting to discourage my men, and worked all the harder. I finally succeeded in getting all the horses on the first line, but had to leave three men with it to keep the animals quiet.

I then commenced on the other line, and then did not have quite as much trouble, although I had fewer men to work with. But we had gained some experience. For instance, I commenced to tie the horses to the center of the line, and also had the halter shanks tied shorter and more securely. This kept part of the line off the ground, so the horses could not so rapidly step over it, and it kept the straps from slipping, which no doubt also saved a mix-up.

After working several hours we were ready, shortly before noon, to start out. We had some trouble in moving out, for the horses did not know what was required of them, but the lead teams were good pullers and were well handled, so we at last got on the road. Some of the horses were headstrong, and wanted to pull ahead, while others were inclined to hold back; but this turned out to be an advantage to the rear teams, as they had very little work to do. We had one or two pretty bad tangles, and in straightening out one of them my hand was caught in some manner between a halter strap and the line, breaking one of the bones, but nevertheless, I kept at work as best I could.





Black Bull, Cheyenne Indian.  
One of Lieut. Wheeler's Scouts.

We got into camp rather late, having made a march of fifteen miles. In camp I had to use the same ropes for the ground lines that had been used on the road, fastening them to the ground by means of iron pins driven well into the soil to hold them firmly. In doing this, all the horses had to be taken off the lines, so we tied them here and there to the scattered sagebrush until we got the lines down. The horses were "recruits," never having been on a ground line before, but they behaved fairly well. I had plenty of hay on the line, which kept them occupied, but occasionally one would want to step over the line, so I had to keep two or three men walking it most of the night to prevent any of the animals injuring themselves.

My hand had been rather painful. I had put on a splint and bandaged it, and on my arrival at the post I showed it to the surgeon. He said it was doing nicely, and that he could not have treated it better.

We got an early start in the morning, the horses giving very little trouble. We traveled pretty well, trotting quite a little, and got into camp about 12 o'clock, having made about twenty miles. At this camp, quite a number of cowboys called on us, commenting on what fine horses we had. If one saw a particularly fine horse, he would call it "his horse." One of them told a member of the guard that he would be around that night to get "his horse"—that he needed a good one in his business.

On the next day the horses worked splendidly, and we made about six or seven miles an hour, arriving at Fetterman before noon. After crossing the Platte River, I went into camp. After getting something to eat and seeing that everything was in shape, I left the camp in charge of a non-commissioned officer and went to town to see some friends and learn the news. While there, an ex-sergeant named Wolf, who had served in my troop (L, 5th Cavalry) and who was then in the employ of the stage company, came to

me quietly and informed me that I had better keep a good lookout on my horses, as the town was full of cowboys many of whom were out of employment, and that some of them would not mind running off with my stock if given the opportunity. The sergeant said he didn't want to alarm me, but he had overheard some of them saying that now was a good time to get a mount and get out of the country. It might be nothing but talk, but at the same time, it would do no harm to be on my guard. I, of course, appreciated this warning, and thanked him sincerely.

After remaining in town several hours, I went to my camp. There had been several cowboys in camp, and about half a dozen were there yet, but they soon got on their horses and rode away. I found that the horses had been watered and fed, and everything was in good shape. I did not feel particularly alarmed, as I had "been through the mill" before, but I had made up my mind if any horse thieves came around my camp that night, they were going to be disappointed, for I did not intend to be there. However, I kept this to myself.

Before going to bed, I went around to give some special orders, after which I returned to my tent, but did not undress. I laid down on my bunk for an hour or so, then got up, called the sergeant and told him I was going to break camp at once, informing him what was up. We broke camp quietly and soon were on the move. I left the sergeant and one man to follow me—not too closely—explaining to the sergeant that if the rustlers should come to our camp and find the bird had flown, they might follow us up, and if they did so, he was to run them off.

I never stopped going until daylight. The night was nice and bracing, the horses never acted better, and we must have made at least forty miles. I then went into camp and remained until afternoon, when I started out again for Wildhorse Creek, the headquarters of Mr. Franklin's horse



ranch. Here I got permission to feed my animals in his corral. The next day we went to the old Fort Reno cantonment just across Powder River, and the following day I drove into the post, thirty-five miles.

Some little time after, I learned that the warning given me by Sergeant Wolf was "straight." A party had visited my camp and was much surprised at not finding me there. However, if I had remained in camp I do not believe I would have lost my horses, as I would have taken every precaution to have prevented their being stolen.

## CHAPTER XLIX

### ESCORTING GEN. JOHN GIBBON TO FT. WASHAKIE



UPON my return from Rawlins, I went on another trip escorting Gen. John G. Gibbon, our department commander, and his party, from Fort McKinney to Fort Washakie. This was in November, 1883. Among the number was Gen. Robert Williams, my old esteemed friend, who was very much interested in me when I entered the service.

To digress a moment: I was in Rio Janeiro, Brazil, in May, 1916, and called on the American minister, Mr. Morgan. The minister himself was at San Paulo, but I there met Lieut. Robert Williams, the naval attache at the embassy. In the course of our conversation, he inquired if I knew Gen. Robert Williams. I told him the general was a very dear friend of mine, whereupon he said Gen. Williams was his father.

Others of the party with Gen. Williams were Thaddeus Stanton, paymaster general; Col. Mason of the 4th Infantry and Major Lord of the quartermaster department. I had taken the first wagons over the mountains to Washakie some time before this with Major E. C. Mason, the inspector-general of the department. This was for the purpose of seeing if it were feasible to do so. The major had been Gen. O. O. Howard's chief of staff during the Nez Perces uprising, and was known to be very devout.

I had told the men of my detachment before starting, that I wished them to be very choice of the language they used on this trip, telling them that the major was a very religious man. On the trip, in ascending one of the mountains—our elevation being several thousand feet—my mules did not pull as they should, and there was some question as

to whether we would be able to get all the wagons up. No doubt the rarified air had a great deal to do with their trouble in pulling. This had not occurred to me. I lost my temper and commenced to cuss the mules in good old Western style. This did not better matters very much, but old mule-skinners used to say that a few cuss words encouraged the mules to pull harder. While I was applying the black-snake freely, and every man was doing all he could to help the wagons up the mountainside, I came to my senses, and thought of my request to the men to be careful of the language they used. I felt ashamed of my conduct, and looked around to see if the major had heard me. He was coming down the mountainside rapidly. I felt sure that he was going to reprimand me for my language, but he grabbed a stick and helped pound them along. With the major's assistance the mules "got down into their collars," and we reached the summit.

Arriving at Washakie, I was complimented by the party for getting them safely there. Col. Mason told Major Lord to tell me if I would transfer to his regiment, he would make me his regimental quartermaster. Gen. Gibbon and his party thoroughly enjoyed their outing. The trout fishing was excellent, and considerable large game was killed, including elk and mountain buffalo. These were the last buffalo I ever saw—to my regret. The mountain buffalo was not as large as the Plains animal. We saw several bands of elk—one band must have numbered at least a hundred head. Gen. Williams killed one, which pleased him very much.

On my return I had some trouble getting my wagons over the mountain because of the snow. I was very anxious to overcome this, as it was getting late in the season, and if I did not succeed, I would have to make a long detour to get back to Fort McKinney. I finally overcame all obstacles, reached the top of the mountain and went into camp among

the pines. The snow had to be shoveled away where my tent was pitched. The men built a large fire; I sat in my tent facing it; it was not cold. The snow was falling, and the beautiful pines, the snow and the cheerful fire, made one of the prettiest camp scenes in my memory.

The snow ceased during the night. It was at least a foot in depth. We could not look down into the valley, several thousand feet below us, because of the bank of clouds. It was a beautiful morning. I had never seen anything like it before, nor have I since.

Before starting down the mountains, I had to take every precaution against an accident, as the snow had made the traveling very slippery. In going down the very steep places I had to lock the four wheels and take the lead mules off the wagon. In the sidling places I had to throw a rope clear over the wagon, attaching it to the reach, and keep three or four men at the other end above the wagon, pulling at times with all their strength, to keep the wagon from tipping over and sliding down the mountainside. In other places I had to attach a rope to the axle and have men hold it to keep the wagon from running against the mules. It was wonderful how easily two or three men could let a wagon down steep places by the aid of a long rope. Before I had taken this precaution, one of the wagons slipped off the trail and landed against a tree about eighteen inches in diameter. We were not able to move it from the position it was in without unloading it, so I thought it would be better to fell the tree, leaving a stump about six inches in height. The stump was blocking the wheels, so we decided to pull the wagon over it. The hill was steep, so I concluded to attach a rope to the axle to keep the wagon from running against the mules when the wheels went over the stump. I passed the rope around a nearby tree, telling the men when the wheel went over the stump, having a fall of a foot or more—to gradually let the wagon down. The mules were

started, and when the wheels went over the obstacle, the men at the rope were not quite quick enough in allowing the rope to slip. It broke, and the wagon ran against the mules. It toppled over, and both wagon and mules went sliding down the mountainside a few yards and lodged with a crash in some small trees. The driver jumped in time, which doubtless saved him from a severe fall. The mules were bruised considerably, but no bones were broken.

The wagon did not fare as well. The tongue was broken and also a few of the bows. The question then arose, "How are we going to upright the wagon without unloading it?" We overcame this difficulty by passing two lariats over the wagon, attaching them to each wheel and hitching a pair of mules to these ropes. We then started them up the hillside and they uprighted the wagon safely. While the accident delayed us an hour or two, we reached the bottom of the mountain without further accident.



## CHAPTER L

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### FIRST LIEUTENANT AT FORT ROBINSON



WAS promoted to a first lieutenancy, October 13, 1884, joining my new troop, H, 5th Cavalry, at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, my old station in 1876. While there I superintended the construction of the new telegraph line to Fort Laramie, Wyoming. The poles were all cut by soldier labor. The distance was sixty-seven miles.

We remained at Robinson until the latter part of May, 1885, when the 5th Cavalry was ordered to change station to the Department of the Missouri. The troops at Fort McKinney, Fort Washakie and Fort Robinson mobilized at Fort Laramie, preparatory to marching to Fort Riley, Kansas, which was to be our station. Lieut.-Col. C. C. Compton was in command of the regiment. Our colonel, Wesley Merritt, was the superintendent at West Point at that time.

I was detailed on special duty as assistant to our regimental quartermaster, now Gen. Wm. P. Hall, adjutant-general, retired. I had charge of the transportation on the march, and was commended by the inspector-general, Major Joseph P. Sanger, for the efficiency with which the wagon train was handled. We had forty six-mule teams and three or four ambulances drawn by four mules each. I had nearly all soldier teamsters, many of whom had never pulled a "jerk-line" (single line) over a six-mule team. I had to go into the mule corral, where there were several hundred mules, to select a number for my transportation. Many of them had just been purchased by the Government and had never been worked in a six-mule team.

In making the selection I had to match them according to their formation and color. A six-mule team consists of the "wheelers" (large mules), "swings" (not quite as large), and "leaders" (still smaller). They are trained to be driven by a single line, the driver riding the near wheel mule. There is what is called the "jockey-stick," about four feet long, between the lead mules, fastened to the bits by a small chain in such a manner that it indicates to the mules which way the driver wants them to go. If to the right, he jerks the line a few times; if to the left, he pulls on the line. The driver also has command of the wheel mules by short reins, which usually rest over the pommel of the saddle. All the mules become so well trained that they are managed with great ease.

Many people think a mule is obstinate, vicious, unreliable and ready to kick on all occasions. This is not so. They are naturally of a gentle disposition—as much so as a horse, although they may not be quite as intelligent. They can stand more hardships than a horse, and require less feed. The Government's allowance of grain for a horse is twelve pounds daily, and for a mule, nine. The driver becomes much attached to his mules, and has pet names for each.

On one expedition we had to negotiate a very steep hill—so steep that many of the teams had hard work to overcome it. There had been a great deal of unnecessary whipping and yelling at the mules. Presently a driver came along, requesting the men to keep quiet and not touch his mules. He started up the hill, speaking gently to the animals, calling them by their names, to which they readily responded. Some of the men commenced yelling and it looked as if one or two were going to strike their mules. The driver pulled his six-shooter and threatened to shoot the first man who struck his mules. There was no more yelling at those mules and I am quite sure that the greater

majority of the men approved of the teamster's action. If we had more such men handling livestock, it would be a blessing.

We were about a month on the road marching to Fort Riley, and had no sooner reached our quarters than Col. Compton, with seven troops of the regiment, was ordered to proceed at once by rail to Christfield, Kansas, then the terminus of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad. I was the quartermaster and commissary of the command.

Over one-half of our little army of 25,000 men were mobilizing at Christfield. The Indians on the reservation were supposed to have broken out (or were going to) and had been raiding the settlements. We were ordered to scout westward and along the southern boundary of Kansas. As we were marching through the settlements, we heard all kinds of wild rumors regarding depredations the Indians were alleged to have been committing, but no one had seen any redskins. It was always somewhere else they had been committing their deviltry. We met several small parties of men armed with squirrel rifles, shotguns and pistols, who thought we might be Indians, seeing our advance guard and flankers from a distance. Not one of them had seen an Indian, but they "knew they were in the country." Seeing two or three wagons coming from the south, I waited for them to come up, and asked the parties if they had heard the news—that the Indians were raiding the settlements. They replied that it was strange; that they had not seen or heard an Indian since leaving the agency three or four days previously. We scouted to Dodge City and beyond there, but did not see an Indian.

We crossed the Canadian river into the Indian Territory and went into camp at Deep Hole, an old stage station, where there were several springs. After remaining a few weeks, scouting the country thoroughly, we went to Camp Supply, I. T., Col. Potter, 24th Infantry, in command. We

left Troops F and H there, together with some of our transportation, and proceeded to Fort Reno.

I had some trouble in crossing the Canadian river, because of quicksand. I unhitched my mules and drove them back and forth two or three times across the river to loosen the sand so that it would wash down stream with the current. I did this until all the quicksand was washed out, thereby giving a hard bottom. I had to raise the wagon beds as high as possible to keep the water from running into them. Then I hitched twelve mules to each wagon, with instructions to the teamsters to keep them going, even if one went down. It is dangerous to stop a minute with an animal or wagon in quicksand. If a wagon gets stalled, it is hard work to get it out. We crossed without an accident, although I thought at one time that I was going to lose a twelve-pound Parrott gun and carriage, which I was taking to Fort Reno. It sank out of sight, but "bobbed up serenely." Had the driver allowed his mules to stop, I might have lost it for the time being.

After the Indian flurry was over, we returned to Fort Riley, Kansas. We marched about 1,500 miles that summer.

I remained on duty at Fort Riley several months, and then received the regimental recruiting detail, with assignment to duty in New York City. I was on duty there over two years, and then joined my troop at Fort Elliott, Texas, in August, 1888.

## CHAPTER LI

### IN COMMAND OF INDIAN SCOUTS



JOINED my troop, H, Fifth Cavalry, at Fort Elliott, Texas, in August, 1888, after a detail of nearly two years and a half in New York City. While at Fort Elliott I was detailed as post adjutant, treasurer and ordnance officer, and was in command of Troop C, Indian scouts, numbering about fifty, composed of mixed tribes, principally Cheyennes and Arapahoes. Very few of them could speak English, so I had to communicate with them through interpreters. The scouts were enlisted for six months, and received the same pay as the white soldiers—\$15 a month, including clothing and rations. They furnished their own mounts, receiving forty cents a day for their use (one horse) and the Government furnished the forage for the animals.

When I took charge of the scouts there were some drinkers among them—including the first sergeant, "Meat." When drunk, he was in a fighting mood, and the other scouts were afraid of him. I told one of the non-commissioned officers, who spoke English, to let me know next time the first sergeant was drinking, and I would put a stop to it. In the meantime, I told the other scouts that I would not permit any drunkenness in camp.

One evening about nine o'clock, shortly afterward, it was reported to me that the first sergeant was drunk and creating a disturbance in camp. I went to the camp and found him in his tent, drunk. As I entered, he picked up his knife and commenced to flourish it. I told him to put up the weapon or he would get into trouble; that I was not afraid of him. I told him if he killed me, it would be a very bad thing for him as well as for the other Indians, as he would be killing



one of his best friends. He then replaced his knife. I then gave orders for the other scouts to fall in for inspection, to ascertain if any of them had been drinking. While they were formed and as I was making the inspection, the first sergeant came reeling out of his tent, seized an iron rake and made for the scouts. They all ran, leaving me alone with the sergeant, "an officer without a command."

Sergeant Goodman, the senior duty sergeant, came up, and catching me by the arm, exclaimed: "Post, post! First sergeant heap——" I took the sergeant's advice and went back to the post. Next morning I went down to the camp and found the first sergeant hard at work in his garden. I called him up and gave him and the other scouts a good temperance lecture, and had very little future trouble with them while at Fort Elliott.

During the autumn and winter of 1888-89, one of my duties while in charge of the scouts at Fort Elliott was to drive drifting cattle out of the Indian Territory. We were only a few miles from the border. In the Panhandle of Texas were many cattle, and they were continually drifting into the Territory, which their owners had no right to allow them to do. The cattlemen had not been very active in driving them out; in fact, it was a big job and an expensive one to do it. About the only way they could have been kept out would have been to fence the boundary line for several hundred miles, and this the cattlemen could not afford.

The scouts had driven the cattle over the line a great many times, but they would no more than drive them out than they would be back again. This work was, of course, very hard on their ponies.

On my first trip out, I met some of the cattlemen and found them good people. They requested me not to let my scouts set prairie fires, and I told them I would try to prevent it. Having been in the cattle business myself, and being then interested in a herd in Kansas, I knew by sad experi-

ence what it meant to have the winter grazing ground burned off. However, upon my arrival in camp, I failed to caution my scouts.

In the morning I sent my men out in different directions to drive the "drifters" out of the Territory, but we had hardly started when, to my dismay, fires started up in several places. I immediately put a stop to this, but it was too late; the damage had been done. I discovered that my first sergeant, "Meat," had given the firing orders, and I called him to account for it. He told me that it was the only way the cattle could be kept out of the Territory, and that it had been resorted to only after the men had tired out their ponies in a vain attempt to keep the cattle out. The fires lasted several days, when luckily a storm came up and extinguished them. I never did know the amount of damage that was occasioned, but it must have been quite heavy. After that, there were no more fires.

There was a creek running parallel to the border line, where the cattle had been accustomed to go for water, using the intervening strip of land—a mile or so wide—for grazing. I told the cattlemen if they would not let the cattle cross the creek, they might continue to let them graze there. I had no right to do this, but I knew it would save me lots of hard work, as well as considerable horseflesh. The cattlemen carried out their agreement and I had no further trouble.

In March, 1888, I was ordered to change station with my scouts from Fort Elliott to Fort Reno, Indian Territory, and there form an experimental company of 100 men, with a view to ascertaining whether the American Indian could adapt himself to military discipline; the object being, in case the experiment proved successful, to make soldiers of them. Lieut. E. W. Casey, 22d Infantry, was to form a similar company composed of Cheyennes, Sioux and other tribes in the north. I was to select my men from the Southern

Cheyennes, Arapahoes and the different tribes in the Indian Territory.

On January 27, 1891, following the Ghost Dance excitement at Pine Ridge reservation, South Dakota, Lieutenant Casey was shot from behind by a young Sioux Indian named "Plenty Horses,"\* after Casey had talked pleasantly with him and had turned his horse to ride away. His body was recovered by his scouts, who were devoted to him.

I left Fort Elliott, Texas, on St. Patrick's day, March 17, 1888, for Fort Reno, with forty scouts and their families. We were escorted out of the post by the 13th Infantry drum corps, which pleased the Indians very much, as they were exceedingly fond of ceremonies.

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\*Plenty Horses was arraigned before a United States court, but was acquitted on the ground that the Sioux were then at war, and the officer being practically a spy upon the Indian camp, the act was not murder in the legal sense of the word. Lieut. Casey's death was greatly deplored by his Cheyenne scouts as the insane act of a boy overcome by the excitement of the times.

## CHAPTER LII

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### THE SCOUTS SHOW GOOD JUDGMENT



FEW days after leaving Fort Elliott, I had to cross the headwaters of the Washita river and camp on the river bank. Upon my arrival there, I found that the near side afforded the best camping ground, and I had about concluded to stop for the night on that side. However, I thought of the old rule, and decided it would be better to cross and camp on the other side, for had it rained during the night (and it was threatening for several days) the chances were that the stream would rise, and I would have difficulty in crossing the next morning, and possibly might be delayed a day or more.

As a matter of fact, it did rain that night, and by morning the banks of the stream were running full. Needless to say, I was greatly pleased that I had crossed over the night before. Even if there is no danger of high water, it is considered the wise thing, when on the march, to cross a stream before going into camp, especially if the crossing is difficult and there are heavily loaded wagons with the command. Animals will not pull as well early in the morning, and if one has trouble in crossing—a wagon or two stuck in the mud or quicksand—it changes one's disposition remarkably and puts a damper on the whole day's march. If the wagons are late getting into camp and everyone is tired and hungry, "the devil is to pay."

I moved out of camp early in the morning, and had been on the road but a short time when Corp. John D. Miles—named for a noted Quaker Indian agent appointed by Presi-

dent Grant,\* and who had wonderful control of his Indians—came running back to inform me that we would have to cross the river again, and that if we hastened, might be able to cross before the flood water reached the ford—which it had not yet done. I was astonished at this, but it developed that at this particular point, the Washita, in its course, formed a large peninsula several miles around, and we were crossing the neck of it, and the flood water had not yet appeared.

The corporal informed me that the crossing was not very good, the banks being quite steep, and he suggested taking some of the scouts, with picks and shovels, and leveling the banks down somewhat. About a dozen wagons belonging to the scouts were being driven by their women, and besides, there was a six-mule team hauling my belongings. I hurried up the wagons and went ahead with the corporal to see about the crossing.

Scarcely had I arrived there when one of the scouts came running up and told me there had been an accident. From his gestures and signs I concluded that a wagon had run over somebody's head, so I hastened back, and discovered that one of the wheel mules had fallen down and the wagon had partially run over its neck!

The wagons came up just barely in time to cross the river before the flood water came rushing down in an immense volume—fully seven or eight feet deep. Each team with its particular wagon had to be helped up the bank. One of the wagons became stuck midway of the stream, and I was afraid it would have to be abandoned; but the scouts managed to get it out. I did not attempt to superintend the crossing, as it was in good hands, one of the sergeants, William Elk, being actually in charge.

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\*At that time there had been a great deal of dishonesty in the Indian service, and Pres. Grant conceived the idea of appointing Quakers as agents, with a view of doing away with the dishonest practices.



## CHAPTER LIII

### ORGANIZATION OF INDIAN SCOUTS



UPON my arrival at Fort Reno, my company was disorganized and was consolidated with the new company of Indian scouts, being known as Company A, Indian Scouts, which gave me a force of 100 men. Most of the scouts in A Company had been enlisted shortly before my arrival, but had received no military training. They also had more than their share of non-commissioned officers, so I reduced some of them to the ranks to make places for my own Indians. This caused some discontent, although I told them I would remake them at the first opportunity.

I found that the scouts had not only brought their own families into camp, but most of their uncles and aunts as well, making a camp of over 500 people. The celebrated Cheyenne chief, Whirlwind, and his family were among the number. I ordered all these "extras" out of camp, save those belonging to the scouts' immediate families. This caused some bitter feeling, especially among those who had to go. I told them it was unpleasant for me to send them away, but that it was a military duty—that they well knew that soldiers were not allowed to have their families in camp, save a special few. I am quite sure several of the scouts approved of my action, as they did not care to feed all their relatives. My Fort Elliott scouts stood by me, and told the disgruntled ones I was doing it for their own good; that I had taken more interest in their welfare than any other officer who had ever had charge of them.

One of the first things I did was to take into consideration the sanitary condition of the camp. This was something new to them. Indians never thought of cleaning up

their camps. When they became uninhabitable they moved to a new camp. I think this had something to do with their nomadic life.

The camp was located on a very pretty stream near some beautiful springs, the outflow of which formed the creek. I had the springs cleaned out and the stream policed for some little distance below the camp. I also put up latrines—special ones for the women and children. This also was something new to them, and it was some time before I succeeded in making all of them use them. I divided the camp into two sections. The sergeant in charge of the platoon took charge of the policing. I had a general inspection on Saturdays, mounted and dismounted. After this was over I inspected their tepees, which the women were required to keep neat and tidy. This was uphill work at first, as they were inclined to put their dishes away unwashed and leaving the bedding unrolled. After awhile, however, they took great interest in it.

One day I was making my usual rounds inspecting the tepees when I saw the wife of Little Hawk putting something into her stove oven. From the manner in which she was acting I was aware that she was hiding something she did not wish me to see. I made her open up the oven door, and there in the baking pan were five or six young puppies, which she was preparing to bake! I must say they looked quite edible, too.

Indians are very fond of barbecued dog, which is prepared in the following manner: A fat-looking dog is selected and tied fast in some selected place for several days, giving him nothing to eat, and only water to drink. He is then fed with a mixture of meat and dried fruit, made into a soft, moist paste, and allowed to eat all he wants. This is to serve as a stuffing or forcement. The dog is killed by knocking him in the head with a hatchet before digestion commences. His hind legs are tied together and he is hung

up by a cord, head down from a pole supported on two forked sticks over a low fire. With a firebrand the hair is burned off his body close to the skin, and then rubbed with buffalo or other fat. It takes many hours' turning and basting the carcass with melted fat. The dog is then roasted whole, for he has not been disemboweled. When the dog is thoroughly barbecued, the guests are assembled for the feast. The dog is cut up and the guests all gorge themselves to their full capacity. The most desirable morsels seem to be the bowels and other soft parts. When the eating is all over, the feast is celebrated by the beating of drums, chanting of songs and dancing. This is kept up for many hours. Those who have tasted of roasted dog claim it is quite edible. The Indians prefer it to any other meat.

The Igorrotes of the Philippines barbecue dogs in a similar manner.

One day White Wolf came to me and begged for the loan of a dollar. I asked the interpreter what he would do with it, and the reply was that he (White Wolf) was sick and had no appetite, and he wanted to buy an unborn calf—that he thought he could relish some of that! It is considered a great delicacy among many different tribes of Indians. He got the dollar! I found that the post butcher was doing quite an extensive business in selling unborn calves at one dollar each.

Occasionally I had to discipline some of my scouts, but I rarely confined any of them in the guardhouse. When they had committed some breach of military discipline I would give them a good lecture—tell them what was right and what was wrong, and what I expected of them. This was usually all that was necessary. There were, however, two or three cases where talking did no good. These men I would not re-enlist, and this served as a good object lesson, for nearly all of them wanted to be re-enlisted.

"Meat" was my first sergeant all the time I was in charge of these scouts—about two or three years. He was

a natural-born soldier, over six feet in height, with a magnificent figure. When he entered my office with the morning report, his hair was always nicely combed, his clothes were neat, his shoes well blacked and he wore white gloves. It was said that he and Sergeant-Major Seymour of the 5th Cavalry were the finest specimens of soldiers on post.

I had a scout in the troop named "Swallow" who had given us a great deal of trouble. One day the first sergeant came up with an interpreter, and told me he had been having some more trouble with Swallow; that he was no good, and that if I said so, he would take him down the creek and shoot him. I told the sergeant that I thought Swallow ought to be killed; that he was worthless, but that I didn't care to shoot him because if we did, both of us would get into trouble. I intimated to the first sergeant that when I came down to camp I would put Swallow in the guardhouse, and that if we could not make a good soldier of him I would not re-enlist him when his time expired.

Upon my arrival in camp, Swallow was in his tent, where Sergeant Otterby and two or three scouts were guarding him. They had been sent out to arrest Swallow, who had been absent two or three days and had missed muster for pay. The first sergeant came up with his gun ready for business. I was just about to go into the tent, when Sergeant Otterby, who could speak English, advised me not to; that Swallow had his gun and might shoot me; that he had been singing his death song and had threatened to shoot anyone who went into his tent.

I therefore thought it best to parley with him. Sally, his wife (who spoke English), and his old father, were in the tent with him. I called them out and told them they had better advise Swallow to come out of his tent and decide to go to the guardhouse; that he had done wrong and knew it; that he was a soldier and would have to be punished the same as a white soldier. He finally decided to go

to the guardhouse with the first sergeant. Had I used forcible means instead of trying diplomacy, there might have been some bloodshed.

Sally was a devoted wife. While Swallow was in the guardhouse he had to work with the other prisoners unloading grain. The sacks were quite heavy. Sally came to me and pleaded to be allowed to take Swallow's place, saying that he was not very strong nor accustomed to hard work, but that she was "heap strong" (showing me the muscles of her arms). When I refused to grant her request, she went away, greatly disappointed. Swallow was one of the first scouts to cut his hair. He enlisted as a soldier in Troop L, Fifth Cavalry.

While at Fort Reno I had for a "striker" (or servant) an Indian named One Horse. He blacked boots for myself and Lieutenant Wilhelm and also cared for our horses. He was very neat about his person, as I had told the Indians it was very necessary to be. One day my cook heard the water running in the bathroom. Knowing that the tub had been removed, she opened the door, and there was One Horse taking a bath in her bread pan! I called his attention to the fact that it was not the proper thing to do, and he replied, "You know, lieutenant, you are always telling us we ought to be clean and neat about our persons. I looked all around, but could not find anything else to bathe in but the bread pan—but I washed it out afterward."

Lieutenant Wilhelm, my assistant, occupied the same quarters with me. He had several pairs of boots and shoes. One Horse polished them up in good shape, and placed them on the mantel of his room, after removing the photos of Wilhelm's best girls from the mantel! He then called the lieutenant's attention to "how nice they looked!"

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Non-commissioned officers and privates of Company A, Indian Scouts, composed of Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and a







1. First Sgt. Meat; 2. Sgt. Goodman; 3. Sgt. Elk—Cheyennes.  
Company A, Indian Scouts.

few Utes and Sioux, commanded by Lieut. H. W. Wheeler,  
5th Cavalry, at Fort Reno, Oklahoma.

First Sergeant Meat  
Sergeant Goodman  
Sergeant Flacco  
Sergeant John Otterby  
Sergeant John Washer  
Sergeant Chester A. Arthur  
Sergeant Woolworth

Corporal John D. Miles  
Corporal Long Neck  
Corporal Tall Son  
Corporal Benny Keith  
Corporal Bold Eagle  
Corporal Nathan Seegar

### TRUMPETERS

White Buffalo  
George Little Bear

Horse Shoe  
Thunder

### PRIVATES

One Horse  
Big Nose  
Bird Chief  
Brave Bear  
Bull Thigh  
Creeping Bear  
Little Cup  
Man Hat  
Old Bull  
Star  
Tony  
Ute  
Alfred Brown  
Red Man  
War Path  
White Antelope  
Frank Murphy  
Ernie Black  
Red Eagle  
Antelope Skin  
Big Knee  
Thomas Otterby  
Swallow  
Miller Red Wolf  
Short Nose  
Little Man  
Little Hawk  
Tall Bear  
Crooked Nose  
Kias Redwolf  
John Stanton  
Spotted Calf  
White Crane  
Little Bear  
Long Hair  
Red Wolf

Bow  
Circle  
Pawnee  
Sam Johnson  
Theodore North  
Clarence Powderface  
Franis Lee  
Jan Hutchison  
White Bear  
Red Man, Jr.  
Two Spear  
Rabbit  
Red  
David Tabor  
James Monroe  
Bottle Nose  
Bad Man  
Joe Weesner  
Bird Seward  
Edward Campbell  
Richard Bearsheart  
Young Man  
Sleeper  
White Log  
Traveler  
Big Horse  
Osage  
Small Rib  
Little Bear, Jr.  
Kiowa  
Bobtail Coyote  
Black Bull  
Short Nose, Jr.

NAMES OF SOME OF THE INDIAN CHILDREN  
BELONGING TO THE SCOUTS

Martin Chance Alone  
Noah Horse  
John Left Hand  
Lizzie Shot-to-Pieces  
Victoria Holy Rock  
Julia Afraid-of-Hawk

Mary Brown Ears  
Julia Crazy Ghost  
Mercy Yellow Shirt  
Emma No Fat  
Julia Stand-Up

## CHAPTER LIV

### DRIVING CATTLEMEN AND "SOONERS" OUT OF INDIAN TERRITORY



OKLAHOMA was opened for settlement in April, 1889. Some time previous to this, President Harrison issued a proclamation prohibiting cattlemen from grazing their herds on Indian lands, and other parties from going into the Territory for the purpose of locating homesteads. These latter were called "sooners." Quite frequently parties would sneak in and build dugouts in some secluded place where they intended later to locate their homes. These "sooners" hoped, of course, that they would not be discovered by the military, whose duty it was to drive them out.

A portion of my duties, while at Fort Reno, consisted of patrolling a part of the Territory with my scouts. Whenever I found cattle I would drive them out over the state line into Kansas or Texas, and when I came across "sooners" I would escort them to the line and turn them loose, on their promise not to return. If they did not so promise I would turn them over to a United States Commissioner for proper punishment. Furthermore, I always destroyed whatever improvements they had made. Usually they would go with me quietly, but always protesting, claiming that the Government had no right to move them off the lands they had squatted on. Occasionally, however, I would find a party who would be quite abusive and dare me to put them off. However, by using a little diplomacy, I generally could cool their wrath and induce them to move out without much trouble.

Upon one occasion I found a man with quite a family who had made extensive improvements. Naturally, he was



loath to leave—in fact, declared that he would not go; that he would die right there first, and that I did not have sufficient scouts to put him off. Although I had about a dozen Indians with me, the more I argued with him, the more stubborn he became. He was well armed and handled his gun as if he meant business. I did not think he would dare shoot, but at the same time I thought it quite possible that his gun might go off accidentally, so I did not propose to take any chances.

I had a sergeant, John Woolworth, with me. He was an Arapahoe who had attended school at Carlisle, Pa., and was the only English-speaking scout in my party. My Indians had previously been instructed just what to do when a situation of this kind arose. They were to appear as if they had no interest in the controversy. (Indians do, naturally.) In case of impending trouble they were to gradually place themselves in such positions that they could “jump” a party and disarm him when I gave the signal.

Finally I came to the conclusion that “forebearance had ceased to be a virtue” in dealing with this man, so watching my opportunity, I gave the signal, whereupon three of my scouts, including the sergeant jumped him like so many cats after a mouse, and took away his gun. I never saw a man so completely surprised. Inasmuch as he had given me so much trouble, I told the sergeant to tie him; that he was a bad man, and I was not going to take any chances.

The scouts took a lariat, tied it around his ankles and wound it around him several times, binding his arms by his side, and fastening the end of the rope around his neck, until they had the man so trussed up that he could scarcely move a muscle. He had a boy about 15 years of age, but I did not consider it necessary to tie him. I then packed up everything about the place that was of value and movable, loaded it in his wagon and destroyed his improvements.

When we were ready to start, the sergeant asked if I intended to let the old man ride on his wagon. I said no,

that he was a dangerous character and we had better take no chances, so we would strap him on a mule. The scouts thereupon brought one up, and this brought the old man to time. He then commenced to beg that I would not put him on a mule, promising by all that was above and below if I would untie him and let him ride on his wagon, he would not give me any further trouble. I therefore relented, and told the sergeant to unbind him, although I was strongly tempted to make him ride the mule for putting me to so much trouble. In the meantime I had assured his wife that I would not hurt him if he would behave himself. She laconically remarked, "Stranger, ef you kin make the ol' man give in, it's more'n I was ever able to do!"

We were about fifty miles from El Reno and twenty-five from the state line. It was my intention to take my prisoner before the U. S. Commissioner at El Reno, but he begged so hard and promised so faithfully that he would never go into the Territory again until it was opened for settlement, that I, feeling sorry for his family, decided to turn him loose. I am quite sure he was a grateful man, and well he should have been, for had I turned him over to the Commissioner, it would have gone hard with him. If he could not have given a bond, he would have been sent to Fort Smith, Arkansas, and held for trial before the United States court, which would not have been in session for some weeks.

## CHAPTER LV

### OUTWITTED BY A WOMAN



WHILE the scouts were stationed at Fort Elliott, Texas, I had among their number an Indian named Yellow Bull, who complained one day that one of his horses had either been stolen or had strayed away. It was reported to me at the time, and I gave Yellow Bull permission to be absent two or three days in an endeavor to locate the animal. He returned unsuccessful, and shortly afterward I was ordered with the scouts to proceed to Fort Reno to take station.

We had not been at Reno very long when Yellow Bull reported to me that he had seen his pony at the trader's store in the possession of a white woman. I went at once to investigate the matter, and found that Yellow Bull was right. I recognized the pony as the one his little daughter had formerly ridden.

Questioning the woman, who stated that she was living on a ranch near El Reno, she said that her husband had purchased the pony of an Indian for \$25, and that it had been in their possession for a long time. I told her it belonged to Yellow Bull, and had been stolen from him at Fort Elliott. However, the woman refused to give up the animal.

As we were on the Indian reservation I thought of taking it forcibly from her possession, but reconsidered the matter. The next day Yellow Bull and I went before a justice of the peace at El Reno and swore out a writ of replevin.

When the case came up, the defendant was not willing to let the justice decide it, but insisted upon having a petit jury (six men). I had decided to represent Yellow Bull

before the court but the justice advised me not to do so, as I was not familiar with the procedure involved. I therefore procured a lawyer, whose fee was \$10.

Yellow Bull and his wife both swore that the horse in question was theirs, and that they had never disposed of it. Several scouts swore that the pony at one time belonged to Yellow Bull, and even the Indian from whom Yellow Bull had purchased the horse, testified that he had sold it to him, and also identified a brand that was on the animal.

I swore that I knew the pony as one Yellow Bull's little daughter formerly rode at Fort Elliott. For the defense, the woman herself was the only witness, her husband not being in the Territory at that time. She swore that they purchased the horse from an Indian when it was a three-year-old colt, for \$25, and at the time of the purchase branded it with a brand-iron that came through the mail to them in a pasteboard box from her father, who was a ranchman living in Utah. She declared that the horse had been in their possession nearly a year and a half.

We cited to the jury that a brand-iron of the size used on the pony was too large to come in a pasteboard box. We proved by an expert horseman, who examined the pony in the presence of the jury, that the animal was at least eight years old, and was worth at least \$75.

In spite of all our testimony, the jury decided in favor of the woman! The expense of the trial was about \$40, which I had to advance.

Yellow Bull was puzzled. He told me he could not understand the white man's law—that the Indians had been told they should give up their unlawful ways of living and walk the white man's road; but that if this was a sample of the white man's justice, he preferred to remain an Indian, as he thought they were more honest than the whites.

When the Cheyennes and Arapahoes received the money for their land, several of them bought horses, mules and

wagons, with which to start farming, as they had received their lands in severalty. Yellow Bull, who had some harness and a wagon, bought a pair of mules, and I asked the Government hay contractor to let him haul hay into the post, which he did. As he was entirely without experience in this line of work, I went into the field and loaded his wagon. I remained on the load and the haymakers pitched it up to me, while I spread it about and explained to Yellow Bull just how to load the hay on so it would ride securely.

In this way Yellow Bull earned more than enough to repay me the money I had advanced him in the lawsuit.

It has been my experience that an Indian has very little show of getting justice in the courts. While at Fort Elliott I had a case where a negro had been selling liquor to my Indians. I interviewed him and he acknowledged the fact, and promised me if I would not prosecute him he would not do it again. He was the man who sold Sergeant Meat the liquor. Shortly after giving me this promise, there was more drinking among the scouts. Upon investigation I found they were getting their liquor from the same party. I had the negro indicted, and took him to Graham, Texas, to be tried before the Federal Court. While I had two or more witnesses who swore that the darkey had sold them the liquor, the bootlegger was found "not guilty!" I might add, that in those days a Texan had very little use for an Indian.



## CHAPTER LVI

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### MY COMPANY OF INDIAN SCOUTS\*



THE company is commanded by Lieut. H. W. Wheeler, 5th Cavalry, who, apart from the special qualifications for this duty, which he possesses in a marked degree, is an officer of much experience in the Western country, and thoroughly interested in his work. It is generally admitted that Lieutenant Wheeler has been indefatigable in his efforts to make a good company, and it affords me pleasure to report that he has succeeded as few officers in the army could have done. He understands the character of the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, is fearless and just in his intercourse with them, and apart from instructing his company in military exercises, which they perform most creditably, has interested himself in their family and tribal affairs, and endeavored to give them better ideas of conduct.

Lieutenant Wilhelm, 10th Infantry, has been on duty with the company since August 16th, and Sergeant Lynch, Troop G, 5th Cavalry, since the organization. Lieutenant Wheeler reports that they have given him valuable assistance. I visited the camp on Sunday morning, and inspected the company on foot and in their tepees. I had previously seen the company mounted, both at drill and review, and on all occasions their appearance and performance were most creditable, and I found the camp and tepees in as good order as any military camp I have ever been in.

By authority of the department commander, the scouts were ordered to march from Fort Reno to Fort Sill, and I accompanied them. Ninety men were in the ranks, a ma-

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\*From the official report of Major J. P. Sanger of the Inspector General's Corps, after visiting Fort Reno on a tour of inspection.

jority of whom had two ponies. This is important to their efficiency, as they cannot do much field service with but one pony, and Lieutenant Wheeler, by making it a partial condition of re-enlistment, has not only furnished an inducement for a profitable investment, but has provided against a serious weakness of organization in case of sudden and arduous campaign.

The company left Fort Reno at 9:30 a. m., September 29th, and reached Fort Sill at 12:30 p. m., Wednesday, October 1st, a distance of 72 miles. Three camps were made enroute, in each of which the scouts spread their shelter tents, pitched the officers' tents, cut wood and brought water with as much willingness as the best soldiers would have done. When the character and past history of these Indians are remembered, this is surprising. Among the last to yield to the Government, they have been the most reluctant to adopt the ways of white men, and are still very independent and, I am told, dangerous Indians. Be this as it may, Lieutenant Wheeler has them under such good control that they do with alacrity all that he requires. The march was very well conducted, and brought out in some degree the peculiar aptitude of the scouts for military service.

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Fort Reno, O. T., Nov. 15, 1890.

Official extract copy respectfully furnished First Lieut. H. W. Wheeler, 5th Cavalry, commanding Company A, Indian Scouts, for his information.  
By order of Major Russell.

C. H. WATTS,  
1st lieut. and adjutant 5th  
Cavalry, post adjt.

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4930 D. Mo. '90.

Extract from report of an inspection of the post of Fort Reno, O. T. made by Major J. P. Sanger, inspector general, on Sept. 23 to 29, 1890.

#### THE COMMAND OF THE POST

Military bearing and appearance at reviews: Co. A, Indian Scouts—Excellent.

Arms and Accoutrements: Co. A, Indian Scouts—Very good.

Undress Uniforms: Co. A, Indian Scouts—Very good.

Appearance of Horses: Co. A, Indian Scouts—Excellent.

Horse Equipments: Co. A, Indian Scouts—Very good.

Company Property: Co. A, Indian Scouts—Very good.

Books and Records: Co. A, Indian Scouts—Very good.

POLICE OF BARRACKS, COMPANY GROUNDS AND STABLES

Company Grounds: Company A, Indian Scouts—Excellent.  
Individual and Company Drill: Co. A, Indian Scouts—Very good.  
Discipline: Co. A, Indian Scouts—Good.

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY

Washington, D. C., December 2, 1890.

Brigadier-General Wesley Merritt,  
Commanding Dept. of the Missouri,  
St. Louis, Mo.

General:

Major J. P. Sanger, inspector general, has reported to me personally a full account of his inspection of Company A of the Indian Scouts, composed of Cheyennes and Arapahoes, serving in your Department.

He informs me that their conduct has been "Excellent" and that they are considered very reliable men when on duty, executing their orders to the very best of their ability: And the Major has explained to me very fully the character and conduct of the Scouts and their ambitious desires to be in all respects good and valuable soldiers.

The account he has given me is very gratifying, and assures me of what I had before believed—that these Indians can be trusted for any service which I may hereafter require of them, either in our own country, or in the event of war with any foreign nation.

I would be glad to have you communicate to the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Scouts this gratification which I feel at their good conduct, and my confidence in their character and qualifications as United States soldiers.

Also please convey to their commanding officer, Lieut. H. W. Wheeler, 5th Cavalry, my cordial commendation of his efforts and appreciation of his success in the organization and training of these valuable troops.

Yours very respectfully,  
(Signed) J. M. SCHOFIELD,  
Major-General, Commanding.

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HEADQUARTERS DEPT. OF THE MISSOURI

St. Louis, Mo., Dec. 5, 1890.

Official copy respectfully furnished the commanding officer Reno, O. T., who will communicate to the company of Scouts and to the officer concerned, the foregoing commendations from the Major General commanding the Army.

BY COMMAND OF BRIG-GEN. MERRITT.

(Signed) WM. J. VOLKMAR,  
A. A. Genl.

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Fort Reno, O. T., Dec. 9, 1890.

Official copy respectfully furnished to the commanding officer Company A, Indian Scouts, for his information.

BY ORDER OF COLONEL WADE.

(Signed) C. H. Watts,  
1st lieut. and adjt. 5th Cavalry,  
Post Adjutant.

## CHAPTER LVII

### INDIAN LIFE—HABITS, CUSTOMS, FAMILY RELATIONS, RELIGION, ETC.

#### COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE



INDIANS have their love affairs as well as their white brethren. It was quite comical to watch the young men and women flirt, as I have often seen them. They dressed up in their very best—colored blankets, beaded leggings and moccasins; their hair carefully combed and ornamented; their faces painted with yellow ochre, on each cheek a heart, a star or a round spot in red, according to their individual tastes. Their blankets were worn over the head in such a manner that only the eyes could be seen.

The women drew the rations; so on ration days the “dudes” came out to flirt with them—making eyes at them, or peeking around the corners of the store buildings. Before young men could get married, they must have some means, in the way of ponies to offer for a wife. The number of ponies a young man gave depended upon the rank of the girl’s family and her beauty. They could be had for from three or four ponies up—together with a few presents.

All arrangements, including the amount to be paid, were made through their friends. Their likes and dislikes were taken into consideration by their parents. If everything was agreeable, the day was set and preparations made for the marriage and feast. The town crier went through the village announcing the event, and inviting all to the feast. There was usually very little ceremony, if any. If the groom was well-to-do, he gave the poor people a few presents. If, as was sometimes the case, a young man did not have suffi-

cient numbers of ponies to buy a wife, he went to some of his friends to help him out by advancing a pony or two, but the lender retained an interest in the bride by way of security until he had been repaid for the ponies.

Quite frequently the bride and groom did not get along very well together, and the wife returned to her parents, who, in some cases were to blame for the separation, not being satisfied with the amount given them by the groom. If the young wife went home to her parents, she could not get married again unless the prospective husband was willing to recompense her own husband in some way. If they could not agree on the amount, it was left to arbitration. If anyone who advanced a pony at the time of the prior wedding had not been paid, he must be appeased in some way. If any man was known to be committing adultery with this woman, he had to compensate the husband by giving him a pony or a money equivalent.

Upon one occasion, one of my scouts complained to me that one of the Indians had taken his horse and would not give it up. He asked me to go to the agent about it. I inquired about the matter, and discovered that he had been too intimate with the Indian's wife. Upon my asking if he did not know the "rules of the game," and the consequences of violation thereof, he acknowledged that he did, and I thereupon told him it served him right; that he ought to have a wife of his own, and that under the circumstances I would not do anything about the matter. I never heard any more from it.

I knew a case one time wherein a white man was caught committing adultery with an Indian woman. A few days afterward his horse was found dead, shot through the head, and it was supposed that the husband had shot the animal for revenge. That settled the affair—there was no suing for damages.

Among the Apaches the mode of punishing a squaw for committing adultery was by cutting off her nose, whereupon



she became a public woman. I have seen three or four squaws with their noses cut off. I do not know of any people on the globe who are more chaste than the Cheyennes, Sioux and Shoshones—but I am sorry that I cannot say as much for the Arapahoes, Snakes and Crows.

Indians have some peculiar customs. At one time the wife of one of my scouts did my laundry work, and I wanted to give her some instructions about it. I asked one of my interpreters, a sergeant named Otterby, whose father was a Mexican and a noted scout, to tell her what I wanted. I observed that he acted rather diffident about it, and inquired what the difficulty was. He answered, "I can't tell her that; she is my mother-in-law." I asked what difference that made, and he replied, "Lieutenant, you know that mothers-in-law make lots of trouble between man and wife; that is the only reason I can give. It is an old custom of the Cheyennes."

No Apache will speak to his mother-in-law, a custom which the woman reciprocates. There are times at the agencies when Indians have to be counted for rations. Even then the rule is not relaxed. The mother-in-law will take a seat with her son-in-law and the rest of the family, but a few paces removed and with her back turned to them all. References to her are by signs only. She is never mentioned otherwise.

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#### INDIAN FAMILY RELATIONS

I do not believe that any race of people exists on earth who are more fond of their families than the American Indians. They rarely punish their children, who are brought up to obey and respect the older people, especially the head men of the tribe. If one wants to gain the confidence of Indians, be kind to them, especially their women and children, and they will remember it and show their gratitude in many ways.

I think the secret of my success in controlling them was my treatment of their women and children. I interested myself in their welfare and tribal relations. If any of them were ill, I would get the post surgeon to see them, especially their children, although at times it was uphill work, for they had great confidence in their medicine men, who accomplished some really wonderful cures.

My first sergeant, "Meat," had a very pretty little girl five or six years of age who, at one time, was very ill. I asked the post doctor to see her. He said she had stomach trouble, and he was afraid he could not do very much for her, as she was a delicate child, and needed proper food and good nursing, which she could not get in an Indian camp.

He said if I would have her brought into the post he would do all he could for her. I did this, pitching the first sergeant's lodge in my back yard. I instructed my colored cook to see that the child had nourishing food, and to prepare it herself.

This change of living and care soon had its effect, and the child commenced to improve wonderfully. Very soon she was able to return to camp. The doctor said that for a while they would have to be very careful about her food, and this was explained to the father and mother. Several days after, I inquired how the child was doing, and what food they were giving her. His answer was that she was pretty well, and that they were giving her all the beef and eggs she could eat! That was their idea of "proper food." The child, however, fully recovered. The mother went to the doctor's quarters and insisted upon working for him. The father was a good hunter, and quite frequently sent the doctor game. Their actions in every way showed their gratitude.

One of the scouts named White Antelope had the jaundice quite badly, and wanted to go to a medicine man for treatment. I told him no, that he must go in to the post

hospital; that the doctor knew more about that disease than any medicine man; that he would get better care, and it would not cost him anything. A medicine man does not practice his profession for his health. Antelope went into the hospital rather reluctantly. It did not seem to him that he was getting cured as fast as he thought he should, and he kept asking permission to go to the medicine man. In fact, he was worrying so much about it that the doctor said it might be a good idea to let him go.

Antelope was gone two or three weeks, and returned, fully recovered in health. It appeared that the medicine man's treatment was white sage tea to drink, sweat baths, and in between times beating the tom-tom and singing. This was done to intercede with the Great Spirit to spare his life. I am quite sure that Antelope thought the incantations had more to do with his recovery than either the sage tea or baths.

At one time I had a trumpeter, a Carlisle boy named White Buffalo, who had more than ordinary intelligence. His hair was as white as snow—one of the very few white-haired Indians I ever saw. In fact, I have only seen two others—a brother and sister at Fort Washakie. One day I heard drumming and singing in the tepee of White Buffalo, and asked the cause. He said his wife was very ill, and that the medicine men were trying to cure her. A few days later I asked him how his wife was getting on, and he replied, "all right"; that one of the medicine men had sucked a bone out of her side as large as his thumb! I tried to convince him that this was impossible, but never succeeded.

I gave the Indians at the post their first Christmas tree. I asked the scouts to subscribe to the fund, which they did very liberally, so that every woman and child received a suitable present. I also gave each child a bag of nuts, candy, cakes and some kind of fruit. Moreover, I had Santa Claus come into camp with a sled loaded down with

gifts. I then explained to them, in simple words, about the day and how Christmas originated. They never forgot the day and very often referred to it.

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#### HONESTY OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

Indians are, as a whole, honest and upright in their dealings among themselves and with the whites. It seems to be the consensus of opinion among the American people that the Indians are dishonest, unreliable and thieving; but in my several years' experience among different tribes, I have always found them truthful and honorable in all dealings with them.

I once heard Bishop Whipple (at that time bishop of the Minnesota diocese, and who no doubt has done more for the civilization of the American Indian than any other man) say that there was not a case on record where they had first broken a treaty with the United States Government or British America.

I was stationed at Fort Washakie more than two years, and during that time was detailed to witness the issuance of beef to the Indians, also the payment of their annuities. I also did considerable work teaching them how to farm. There were about 4,000 Shoshones, 3,000 Arapahoes and some Utes and Bannocks there. No restrictions were placed on them about coming and going in at the post, and the only guard we had in post was Number One, at the guardhouse, and one sentinel over the storehouses at night. They were there more as a precaution against fire than anything else. Moreover, the officers did not make a practice of locking the doors of their quarters.

A great many Indians would come to see our commanding officer, Major John J. Upham, Fifth Cavalry, who had their interests at heart, and had great influence over them. They were welcomed at my quarters at all times, and I used to buy a great many curios from them, so if they had any-

thing to sell, they were quite sure to come to me. Many times we could not agree about the price of an article. They had no idea about the value of money. If they wanted more for an article than I considered it worth, I would tell them to take it away; or if they had anything I was anxious to get for my collection, I would count out my offer in silver dollars and lay it out for them to look at. As they could not tell the different denominations of paper money, I used silver. If I had any business to attend to, I would leave them to ponder over the matter, and when I returned I found either the money or the article bargained for.

Upon one occasion an Indian princess, daughter of a principal chief, had a beautiful set of saddle equipments, which I had set my heart on obtaining, but she would not part with them. I told her if she ever decided to sell them at any time, to come to my quarters and I would buy them. Several months afterwards she came, and I offered her \$75 for them; but she wanted a great deal more than I could afford to give, so I placed the money on my desk, as I usually did in those cases, and told her whenever she was ready to accept my offer, she would find the money on my desk, and if I was not there, to take the money and leave the equipments. She would not accept my offer that day, and took the articles away with her; but I did not give up all hope of getting them.

On ration day—every two weeks—I had to go to the agency to witness the issue of beef. At these times I would count out the \$75 and leave it on my desk as usual, hoping that some day she would accept. Not long afterward, to my great surprise, when I returned from the agency, I found the money gone, and the equipments were there.

I relate these incidents to show that the Indians were allowed to come to my quarters at all times, whether I was in or not, and I never lost a single article by theft that I am aware of.



J. K. Moore was the Indian trader at Fort Washakie for many years, and was well known by many of the older officers. He told me that in all those years he never had anything stolen, to speak of, in or around his premises; that he would let the Indians have goods on credit, with the understanding that they were to pay for them when they brought in their furs, and that they rarely failed to settle with him.

At one time I was stationed at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, for a year or more, near which place was located the Cheyenne and Sioux agencies. There were several thousand Indians there, and they had the reputation of being honest and trustworthy. I found the same thing to be true at Darlington, Indian Territory, where I was an Indian agent for a short time.

In their own villages they had no means of guarding their personal property. If an Indian wanted to leave the village and his lodge for a few days, he would notify the chief of his band, or some friend, that he was going to be absent. He then locked up his belongings in his tepee by placing a log or some brush at the entrance. Their tribal laws were not many, but what they did have, their people were taught to respect. If a man or woman was caught stealing, the matter was investigated by some of the head men, and if proven, he or she was taken out and publicly whipped.

Bishop Whipple tells with great gusto the following story:

"While visiting an Indian village in one of the Dakotas, many years ago, I rode up to the head chief's lodge, where I was expected to remain for the night. The chief came out and received me, while, at the same time, his squaw unsaddled my horse and placed the equipment alongside their tepee. I asked the chief if they would be safe there, whereupon he observed, 'Yes, there isn't a white man within two days' ride of here.' "

During all the four years or so that I had charge of my Indian scouts, numbering from thirty to one hundred, I never had a complaint that anything had been stolen.

I am very sorry to say that since the whites have come in contact with the Indians, the latter have become addicted to many of the vices of the former—principally, not paying their debts, and drunkenness. However, it is not among the older Indians as a rule, but is confined to the “rising generation.” While they like “firewater,” the majority of them do not drink. I had some drunkenness among my scouts, but it was mostly among the young men who had been away to some Indian school. Of my non-commissioned officers I had only one who drank, and he but periodically. One of the scouts, Yellow Bull, told me that many years before, when he was a young man, he was with a war party that captured a Mexican wagon-train, down on the border. They found in the wagons two or three barrels of whiskey, on which they all got drunk. He said it made him very sick, and that he never had been in that condition since.

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#### INDIAN MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES

When I had charge of the Indian Scouts, I used to marry and divorce them. One of my Indians—Red Eagle—fell in love with one of the two wives of Thunder, and their love was mutual. Thunder was my blacksmith. Red Eagle wanted to marry the woman, and offered Thunder three ponies and about \$25 in money, but he refused to sell her. Thunder had had some trouble with this wife, and had tried to whip her, but he told me that he did not hurt her very much, because some of the other women pulled them apart.

After investigating the case thoroughly, I decided to let this woman go and live with Red Eagle. I brought the parties all up before me and told them that they knew the white man's ways, which allowed only one wife, and I didn't see why Thunder should have two wives and Red Eagle

none, and that I believed one wife was enough for any man to care for. Therefore, I would divorce this woman from Thunder and give her to Red Eagle. I told Thunder that if he would not accept the ponies and money at that time, he would never get anything. However, he would accept nothing, and I married the squaw to Red Eagle.

Some few weeks later I was making an inspection of the Indian camp, and Thunder's remaining wife, Julia, hailed me. This was the first I knew that she could speak English, but it seems that she had been a Carlisle girl. She told me that Thunder had changed his mind, and now wanted those ponies and the money for the other wife. I reminded her that I had already told Thunder if he did not take the ponies and money at the time I divorced the second wife from him, he never would get anything; and then I said to her: "Julia, you know very well that you don't want that woman to come back." She replied, "I don't care whether she comes back or not; she didn't treat Thunder right, anyway." I presume Julia had been promised some of the money and ponies if she could have prevailed upon me to make Red Eagle pay Thunder.

Another case of a somewhat similar nature, in which a couple of my scouts figured, was as follows:

Sergeant C. A. Arthur wanted to marry a certain Indian girl, but he lacked the necessary number of ponies to pay for the squaw. He went to Corporal Long Neck and asked for the loan of a pony to consummate his matrimonial venture. Long Neck gave Arthur the pony, but according to the Indian custom he retained an interest in the bride until Arthur should have paid him back the pony. Arthur and his bride did not "hitch" very well, and he shortly abandoned her.

Then Scout Big Knee fell in love with the woman and married her. Arthur thereupon went to Big Knee and demanded five ponies from him as payment for his late wife.

Big Knee gave the former husband two ponies and \$10 in cash, but Arthur was not satisfied and demanded the full five ponies.

The parties came to me to have the matter settled. It appeared that the squaw was the favorite sister of another of my scouts named Waldo Reed. Reed was not at all pleased that Arthur had abandoned his sister, and did not want Big Knee to give the five ponies to Arthur. Both Big Knee and Reed wrote me letters about the affair—or rather, one wrote both letters as the other could not write. These letters are interesting and are produced herewith verbatim in facsimile. Although somewhat incoherent to the average reader, they are good specimens of the manner in which the red man expressed himself in writing.

The custom of making woman the head of the house and investing her with the care of the property, is unusual among the aboriginal races. As far as I know, the Hopis and Zunis are the only tribes that do so. Their women are vested with the power of divorce. If the husband is uncongenial, out he goes, and his personal belongings follow him. His only recourse is to return to his mother for sympathy, telling her how cruelly he has been treated.

The docile Hopi is compelled by their tribal laws to aid his father as long as the old man can find work for him, and it is said that he rarely fails to do so. The Hopis and Zunis are few, and growing less numerous, while the more democratic Navajos are flourishing. They let the women do most of the work, and the young men are by no means amenable, like the Hopis, to paternal advice.

One time Prof. Welch of Philadelphia, one of the Indian commissioners, came to Darlington agency on a tour of inspection. He was trying to get the Indians to consent to have their children go to school at Carlisle. Most of these Indians objected to it, preferring to have them remain at the agency and go to school there. We got the Indians

Oh! Dear Lady Mary:

May 3, 1899

My dear Mr. Whelan

Dear Sir,

I let you know that I have married Mrs. Arthur. So he left his wife and son so I married her to take care of her. I thought you say that some body his wife to make her a maid. They had take one horse. So I tell you about this way this morning. Well Mr. L. A. Arthur he is not five horse. I gave him 2 horses and so on he want five horse. I guess you told him but if I give him five horse. I kept not having long. I want to know about long neck

This morning he want horse. So lady ever demand one horse. I want to know these places you tell them about that.

From you one of cow

a. Big horse

Dear Sir H. W. Whelan I want to send him 2. 2. 2. 2. to take five horse from Big Horse. I want to my brother-in-law, Arthur and he left my sister last summer ago. I don't want him to take back her my sister because he has not trust her right. I have my character. I do not want her to trouble. I wish

Your letter talk to him about this so he know himself. I thought I write this morning. Myself. I know all about it. Well, my way, I am they got married. They had his wife and they doing right. He is to make my sister. We are not like so that they have done. We are not lose his horse from him. He lose one cow from me. and I was give my sister one mule but he take back from her. I don't like that way. Well I guess I take from you price. Well also I send



together and had a feast. Cattle were killed and roasted. The professor talked to them regarding their children, and after he had finished, an old Indian got up and said he believed it was a mighty nice thing to send their children to the Carlisle school, especially the girls; that he had sent some of his girls away to school, where they had been taught the white man's ways. They could read and write, and had been taught to sew, keep house and cook, and when they returned to the agency they were well dressed, better looking and were all well married, some of them having married white men. He further said that when those girls went away to school they were worth only two or three ponies, but on their return they were worth eight and ten ponies!

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#### INDIAN RELIGION

The Cheyennes, Arapahoes and other Indian tribes, like some civilized people, believed that trouble and misfortune were visited upon them for their sins; that all the good visited on them came from the good spirit and all the evil from the evil spirit.

Not many years ago, these Indians held sun dances, at which time the male members of the tribe volunteered to submit themselves to torture and suffering to satisfy the evil spirit. At these dances they usually erected a pole of some height, on which was placed a buffalo skull. They attached lariats, made from buffalo hides, near the top of the pole, for the ceremony. The dancers made two incisions three or four inches long and two or three inches apart, on their right and left breast, or in the shoulder blades. In these slits lariats were fastened. At high noon the signal was given by the master of the ceremony, and the dancers commenced to circle the pole, gradually leaning backward or forward with considerable force. While doing this, the lariats quite frequently tore out, causing considerable suffering. If some of the dancers were about to succumb from



Company A, Lieut. Wheeler's Indian Scouts, Fort Elliot, Texas. Lieut. Wheeler in Foreground on Horseback.



the ordeal through which they were passing, their friends would seize them, pulling them from the lariats and tearing loose the slits. This was done to save the dancer from disgrace. If they succumbed from the ordeal, it was considered bad medicine.

Warriors were supposed to resist all suffering. During the dancing the tom-toms were beating and the musicians singing to keep up the courage of the dancers. The warriors were nude, except the breech-clout, and their bodies were painted various colors, according to the individual taste.

John H. Seger, an old friend of mine, who has done much to educate and train the Cheyennes and Arapahoes in the white man's way, and who is more familiar with their history and customs than probably any other man now living, told me, in one of my interviews at his sub-agency, of a sun dance he witnessed many years before. I remember the substance of a prayer made by Raven, a celebrated Arapahoe chief and medicine man at the Red Hills.

It was high noon. Six warriors stood nude, save for the breech-clout. To their bleeding breasts was fastened a rawhide lariat. In the midst of these tortures, and while one warrior was dragging about a buffalo skull, the horns of which were attached to the lariat, old Raven stepped out and, raising his hands toward the sun, he addressed the Great Spirit, as he moaned:

"Many are sick and suffering from disease. The great buffalo are leaving us; the white man surrounds us like hunters around a herd of tired buffalo. We know this punishment is visited upon us for our disobedience to the wish of the Great Spirit. We are willing to suffer the just punishment from the invasion of the white man. We realize that the buffalo will disappear with the coming of the white man. What we ask is, that the Great Spirit will pity us and let the soldiers and young men bear the suffering for their

people, which they are willing to do, as the Great Spirit can now see. We ask that the Great Spirit be satisfied with this voluntary suffering and that the women and children who are weak and tired, be spared from sickness and suffering. We ask that, as there is no hope for the Arapahoes, except to get their food from the earth as the white man gets it, the Great Spirit may so influence the young men and children that they may be willing to cultivate the earth and raise food to keep the people alive."

This prayer expressed the sentiment of the Arapahoes. When I was there again in 1892, I observed, and since then have been told, that they have been slowly but steadily advancing toward the fulfillment of their prayer.

The Government put a stop to the sun dance many years ago.

The Hopi Indian believes that the souls of all deceased adults go to the Grand Canyon. When a man dies, a grave is dug. The nearest relative of the deceased carries the body to the grave, places it in a sitting posture, facing the Grand Canyon, erects a long pole between the legs, locks the dead man's fingers around it and fills the grave. To the top of the pole, protruding above the ground, he ties one end of a string, and leads the other end in the direction of the Grand Canyon. At the end of four days it is believed that the soul leaves the body, climbs the pole, and, with the string to guide it, goes to its eternal home in the canyon.

The Navajos, on the contrary, are very superstitious about handling dead bodies. They believe that the evil spirit that kills the person, hovers around the "hogan"—as the lodge is called—awaiting other victims, and a hogan in which a death occurs is never again occupied. Navajo hogans are always built with the entrance facing the east. When a death occurs in one of them, an opening is invariably made in the north side. Therefore, when one sees



a hogan with the north side knocked out, he may be certain some one has died in it.\*

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#### INDIAN MEDICINE MEN

The Indians regarded sickness as the visitation of an evil spirit, and like the Chinese and other Orientals, they think this spirit can be exorcised only by incantation and by being given magic potions, the secret of which rested with the medicine men, who enjoyed a high repute and did no labor. Their profession, however, was a dangerous one, and, unlike civilized doctors, they were not supposed to make many errors. The common people regarded them with great awe, and when they were superintending the mummeries over a sick brave, were considered bigger men than the head chief himself.

Before commencing his work, the medicine man goes through many fasts and vigils and many weird incantations. It is doubtless this elaborate religious preparation that makes the Indian think he is deserving of punishment if he fails. The Yumas, as well as some other tribes, find many ways of putting the medicine men away if they make too many failures in not saving their patients.

Many of these medicine men were wonderfully skilled in treating all ordinary complaints. Their knowledge of herbs was remarkable, and they had sure cures for even the bite of the deadly rattlesnake and venomous insects. The weed used for the cure of such bites was usually found where rattlesnakes abounded. It was applied directly to the wound and drew out the poison. The medicine men also brewed a tea that counteracted the poison. The Mexicans also knew of this weed.

I learned this on an occasion when a party of them were working on my ranch (Rose creek ranch) during hay-ing. One of the Mexican children was bitten by a rattle-

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\*Dillon Wallace in OUTING.

snake while trying to feed the reptile a grasshopper! The snake evidently was coiled, as they do not bite except when in that position. One of the Mexicans at once found the weed in the creek bottom, made the tea and gave the child some of it to drink, at the same time applying the weed to the wound. The sufferer recovered. In cases where some of my stock had been bitten by rattlers, I have applied common baking soda to the wound, which, in a few cases, saved the animals.

When it came to contagious diseases, like measles, smallpox, etc., the medicine men were powerless. Consumption has sapped the strongest of the Indians, who are peculiarly susceptible to this dread scourge—quite contrary to what one would infer, as their nomadic life of the old days kept them in the open air. I think the reason this terrible disease had such a telling effect on the Indian was that they took very little precaution against colds or of coming into contact with victims of tuberculosis. I am glad to state that mortality from this disease decreased greatly after they were placed on Government reserves.

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#### TWINS

Twins are usually regarded by Indians as unearthly and are rather feared as possessing occult power. Among some of the Oregon and other Pacific Coast tribes they are regarded as abnormal, and one or both are killed.

This is not so with the Plains Indians or the Shoshones and Bannocks. I knew a brother and sister at Fort Washakie who were twins, and both were regarded as being unusually fortunate and lucky in anything they undertook.

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#### WHY INDIANS TOOK SCALPS

The reason an Indian would sacrifice everything to remove the body of one of his tribe who had been killed in battle, was to prevent the taking of the dead tribesman's

scalp. The belief of the Indian was that a man who was scalped could not enter the Happy Hunting Grounds, but was doomed to wander in outer darkness forever. For that reason he always scalped his enemy, so that when he, himself, reached Indian heaven he would not be bothered by a lot of his enemies whom he had killed during his lifetime. Naturally it was a point of order for him to get the body of his friend away, so that he would not be debarred from the Happy Hunting Grounds. Sometimes an Indian did not scalp an especially brave man. (It was said that Gen. Custer was not scalped.) It was the belief of the Indian that if he killed a man in battle and did not scalp him, he would be the slave of the unscalped one in Indian paradise.

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#### INDIAN CONCEPTION OF HANGING

Another way an Indian can be cut off from the Happy Hunting Grounds is by strangulation. He believes that the soul escapes from the body by the mouth. Should death occur by strangulation the soul can never escape, but must always remain with, or hovering near, the remains, even after complete decomposition.

As the soul is always conscious of its isolation and its exclusion from participation in the joys of Paradise, this death has peculiar terrors for the Indian, who would much prefer to suffer at the stake than die by hanging, even if the strangulation may be a mere matter of accident. The unfortunate one might be a person of integrity and wisdom—a woman of virtue or an innocent child, but should one or the other chance to become entangled in the lariat of a grazing horse and strangled, the soul would never enter the Happy Hunting Grounds, or Indian heaven.

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#### SUICIDE AMONG INDIAN TRIBES

Suicide, though not common among Indians, is considered "big medicine," a high religious act. Through it the man rises superior to his gods, whatever the special religion

of an Indian may be in regard to the taking of the scalps of slain enemies. Col. Richard Irving Dodge, probably one of the highest authorities on the customs of the American Indian of his day, states in his most valuable work, "Our Wild Indians":

"I have never yet known a single case where the scalp of a suicide was taken, and in many cases the superstition is so strong as to prevent the Indian from even touching the body. If an unscalped body is found with many terrible wounds, gashed and mutilated, it was the deliberate purpose of the Indians to torment the soul; if it be found with but one mortal wound it is a case of suicide."

Colonel Dodge relates several cases which confirm his opinion that a suicide was never scalped. I will briefly relate one of these, which personally came under his own observation. In 1855 the post of Fort Davis, Texas, was established. He was acting quartermaster. The post guide, Sam Cherry, and an escort of one non-commissioned officer and three men, were sent out in search of timber suitable for some logs. That night the party did not return. Next morning early, the wagon master of a train came into the post and reported that the dead body of a man and horse had been found in the road about six miles from the post. A company of infantry was immediately ordered out and proceeded to the spot, where they found the body of Sam Cherry, pinned fast to the ground by the dead body of his horse. The search was continued, and in a lateral canyon were found the bodies of the sergeant and the three privates, riddled with bullets, mutilated and disfigured, but giving every evidence of having sold their lives as brave men should. The trails were examined and the whole story worked out. The party had traveled along the road nearly to the entrance of the canyon, known as the "Wild Rose Pass," when suddenly about thirty mounted Indians dashed from the bushes along the stream, cutting off their retreat

toward the fort, and driving the men up the lateral canyon. Suspecting a trap, Sam Cherry dashed through the lines of the Indians, regaining the road, and ran for life away from the post, followed by a number of yelling savages. He was evidently doing well, when his horse stumbled and fell, breaking its neck and pinning Sam's leg to the ground. In an instant he was surrounded by the exultant Indians. Raising himself slightly, Sam fired five shots at his enemies, then turning the muzzle of his pistol against his own temple he escaped the torture of their vindictive rage by his "last shot."

The baffled and terrified Indians went away as fast as their ponies would carry them, not even touching the body nor taking Cherry's arms.

Custer's body was found unscalped and un mutilated. If so, Colonel Dodge's knowledge of Indians convinces him that Custer died by his own hand.

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#### INDIANS AS TRAILERS

While I was officer of the day on one occasion at Fort Washakie, Wyoming, a prisoner escaped from the guardhouse during the night. The matter was not reported to me by the sergeant of the guard until reveille. We had some Bannock prisoners, so I sent for one known as "Bannock Frank," who could speak some English, and told him that a prisoner had escaped from the guardhouse.

I told him I wanted him to go and get two or three good trailers, and that if they caught the prisoner I would pay them a reward. He secured the trailers and they circled the guardhouse, which was located on the banks of a stream, but could not find any tracks which indicated that the prisoner had left the guardhouse. Two of the Indians then crossed the stream and followed it up the banks, the other two following on the opposite bank. This was on their own initiative.



They soon discovered where the prisoner had broken off his shackles a few hundred yards up the river, and a short distance further found where he had come out of the water. The sergeant of the guard, who accompanied them, came back and reported that the Indians had found the trail and wanted some horses with which to follow it. I told the sergeant to go to the troop stables and get a mount for each of them. They followed on the trail, trotting most of the time, and finally located the prisoner trying to hide in the mountains about ten miles from the post. The sergeant said he could not see a sign of a trail, but the Indians had no trouble whatever in following it.

While the scouts were serving at Fort Elliott, Texas, a soldier deserted from one of the infantry companies. I was not notified of the desertion until guard-mounting, about 9 a. m., so the deserter had had several hours' start. The scouts had some trouble in finding his trail because of the many footprints around the garrison, and there was no sure thing that he had left the post on foot. They finally found the trail about a half mile from the garrison. Following it up several miles, it led to the door of a ranch house. Entering, they found the deserter hiding under the kitchen table.

While I was stationed at Fort Reno, Indian Territory, a prisoner, while at work, escaped from the guard. Lieutenant Wilhelm, my assistant, happened to be in the post and picked up Sergeant Goodman, a scout, and started out after the escaped prisoner. They found him hiding in a near-by ravine, whereupon he started to run up a gulch, with Goodman after him. The man would not halt, so the sergeant shot at him, knocking him over. "My God!" exclaimed Wilhelm, "you have killed him!" Goodman smiled. "Nothing in it; nothing in it," he grunted, at the same time grinning from ear to ear. Suddenly the prisoner jumped up, in a dazed manner and exclaimed, "Lieutenant I thought I was killed sure." Goodman had placed a blank cartridge in his gun, and as he was quite close to the prisoner, the wax holding the powder in the shell, hit the man in the back of

the neck. Wilhelm felt very much relieved that the man had not been killed.

My captain, Taylor, told me that while in Arizona his command was in the mountains after some renegade Apaches, and were marching at night on an old trail. Striking of matches and smoking was, of course, forbidden. Suddenly the scouts reported that something had been walking in the trail. The command was halted, a match was carefully struck, and it was discovered that a bear had come into the trail, taken a few steps along it and then left it. It was found that one of the scouts had stepped into the bear's track while passing over it.

The Navajos are wonderful trailers. Not many years ago a murder was committed on the reservation, and the murderer had several hours' start before the Indian police took up the trail. It happened that the fugitive's unshod pony had one nicked hoof. This mark the Indians followed swiftly, even where the murderer had cunningly followed a bunch of ponies, thinking, no doubt, to make the hoof-prints of his mount unrecognizable. But within a day after they had struck the trail, the Indian police had run down the murderer in a stronghold in the mountains.

The Apaches are a tribe capable of standing great fatigue under a sweltering sun, and will follow a trail as unerringly as a bloodhound. When old Geronimo was on the warpath and scalping settlers in the Salt River Valley, Arizona, it was necessary that word be sent immediately from the garrison at Fort Yuma to a detachment of cavalry under Captain Lawton, 100 miles to the northwest.

The country was dry, rugged and hot. No horse could travel it, nor could it be done by relays, as there were only blind trails. A young Apache scout agreed to carry the dispatch. Stripped to the loins, and with a water bottle and some parched corn and dried meat, he left the fort at 4 o'clock in the morning, on foot and alone. He arrived at Lawton's camp about 8 o'clock that same evening. He had covered 103 miles over a rough country, and much of the time with the thermometer at 100 degrees in the shade!

## CHAPTER LVIII

### THE INDIAN MESSIAH CRAZE



URING the so-called Ghost-Dance excitement in the latter part of 1890, Sitting Bull, an Arapahoe\*, came to our agency at Darlington, near Fort Reno, I. T., and commenced preaching about the coming of the Messiah. He was from the Shoshone agency, Wyoming, where I had known him very well. He came to my quarters quite frequently. His wife gave me a very pretty pair of moccasins.

Sitting Bull claimed that he had had a dream, in which he was told that he must go and find the Messiah, and that he had followed a star for eighteen days through a barren country, and that wherever he camped, a pool of water would form to quench his thirst. This star, he said, went before him until it came and stood over the entrance of a cave, where he saw Christ, and was invited to become the first and greatest apostle, and that he must go south to the Arapahoes and Cheyennes and prepare them for the coming of the Messiah.

Sitting Bull declared that the Messiah was to expel the whites from the country, bring back the buffalo and restore to the Indians their hunting grounds of former days. He said that the ghost dances must be kept up night and day until Christ came.

The Indians did keep up the dancing for several months. At our agency they were divided up into relays—one party relieving the other when fatigue overtook them. I have seen them drop down perfectly exhausted. A blanket would be thrown over the prostrate forms, and they would be allowed to remain until they had recovered from their

\*Not to be confounded with Sitting Bull, the Sioux medicine man.

swoon. I have seen two and three hundred dancing and singing in a ring which they had formed. They would fold their arms across their breasts, clasping each other's hands, which brought their bodies close together, and men, women and children would form these dancing squads.

I told some of the Indians that there was plenty of water in the country Sitting Bull had passed over, and that he could not have died from want of water if he had tried ever so hard. To this, they would shake their heads, saying: "It must be so if the Arapahoes say that it is so."

Their faith in each other was great, owing to their child-like simplicity. Then several other shrewd men among them, seeing how Sitting Bull had prospered by reason of presents given him by his converts, also commenced to have dreams and see visions. In time, therefore, quite a number were preaching about the coming of the Messiah.

I allowed my scouts to attend these dances, because I realized that it would be difficult for me to keep them away. Further, if I had forbidden it, it would only have fanned the prevailing excitement of the moment. I was quite sure the agitation would die out in time, and that if we attempted to stop it, it would only make matters worse.

During the Messiah craze, my Indians were very much interested in the new religion. Lieutenant Wilhelm, who was afterward killed in the Philippines, was my assistant, and One Horse, one of my scouts, told him that the Messiah was coming—that the old days would come back, and with them the buffalo and other game which the Indians had enjoyed and that all the white people would start back across the ocean, and when they reached the middle of the "big pond," the Great Spirit was going to put down his hand and sink all their vessels, and this country would then all be turned over to the Indians again.

Wilhelm said to One Horse, "Do you think it is right for the lieutenant and myself, who are friends of yours, to

go with the rest of the whites and be drowned? Here we are, doing all we can for you."

Old One Horse, with tears in his eyes, said that the scouts were very fond of us, and that he was very sorry, but, nevertheless, we would have to go, too. Then pondering a moment, he added that he would see what he could do for us; that he would go down and talk with the other Indians, and possibly we could be adopted into the tribe.

In a few days he returned, saying that the Indians had had some sort of a council, and that Wilhelm and I would be adopted into the tribe, and therefore, we would remain with the Indians. However, he added, we must marry into the tribe, and they had selected our wives!

This interesting part of the ceremony never came to pass, as, following the battle of Wounded Knee, the Messiah craze gradually died out.

One of the strangest, as well as one of the saddest ceremonies that I ever witnessed, was in connection with these great dances. It was a variation from the usual method of conducting these religious assemblages.

An Indian well along in years, nearly nude, stood perfectly motionless for an hour or more, his hands raised toward the sun, as if in supplication to the Great Spirit. It was wonderful how he could remain in that tiring position so long. Near-by were other old men of the tribe, with vessels containing meat cut into small pieces. They gave this meat to the other Indians, talking all the time, while the medicine man remained in his tiresome position, his eyes wide open, gazing at the sun. I was told that the meat given to the Indians was buffalo meat which Sitting Bull had brought from the north. That could not have been, as the buffalo had all been killed off many years before.

Suddenly, and apparently without a signal, the whole multitude rushed toward this man, and falling down at his feet, set up a loud lamentation. It seemed to me as if all



the sorrows of the North American Indian were concentrated in that wail! Tears were streaming down their copper-colored faces, and some of the women were weeping as if their hearts would break.

Calling Fannie Flying-Man, an intelligent Indian woman, the wife of one of my scouts, I asked:

"Fanny, what do they say to you?"

"Oh," she soberly answered, "they were talking about our people." That was all the information I could get from her.

Then I asked others. The general reply was "Nothing," accompanied with a shake of the head.

After all, when one considers their treatment at the hands of unscrupulous whites, these poor victims of civilization were not to be blamed for their dream of the coming of the Messiah, and their hope and anticipation for better days; nor for the belief that the white men were to return across the ocean from whence he came, and that the buffalo would return, nor for their superstition concerning the resurrection of their Great Chief, an Indian long since interred in the grave.

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#### NARRATIVE OF JIM BRIDGER, A NOTED SCOUT

Jim Bridger, for whom Fort Bridger and Bridger's Pass were named, was a well known frontiersman who had been among the Indians since he was fourteen years of age. He was reticent and hard to know, but a genius in many ways.

One day the Overland Stage from Omaha arrived at Fort Bridger, Utah, and an Englishman stepped out and inquired in the sutler's store for both the post trader (Judge Carter, well known to the older officers), and Gen. Anson Mills. He had a letter from General Sheridan, stating that he was a captain in the British army, on a journey around the world, for the purpose of writing a book, and that he wished to see Jim Bridger.

We called on Bridger, who lived alone in one of the officers' quarters. We found the old man looking grave and solemn. Our English friend plied him with questions, stating he had been told by General Sheridan that he, of all others on the Western Plains, could relate the most thrilling reminiscences regarding the exciting scenes of the settlement of the frontier.

Bridger made no advances, appearing like a child, reluctant to "show off." The captain requested the old scout to tell them something interesting. Finally Bridger told the following story:

"Well, I think the most exciting adventure I have had on the frontier, was in the winter of 1855, when Jack Robinson and I went trapping about 200 miles down the Green river, in the Ute country. We knew the Utes were unfriendly, but we did not think they were war-like, so we got two horses and a pack outfit, and in December went into camp on Green river. We spent two months in trapping, and were about ready to return, when early one morning we saw a large war party coming up the stream. We only had time to saddle our horses, gather our rifles and ammunition and mount. We estimated their party at about 100, and started out the horses at full speed, abandoning everything we had in camp.

"As we became hard pressed, one of us would dismount and fire, and so continuing, checking our pursurers until we gained some ground. Their horses were not only fresh, but they had lead horses with them, which gave them great advantage over us, who had but one animal each.

"We continued this method of defense all day, and by night had killed thirty of the Indians. But our horses were so tired we feared the enemy would take us. At the foot of the mountain there was a dense timber. Here we took shelter about dusk, knowing the Indians would not follow in the dark. We spent the night in great fear as to what

would become of us next day. Knowing that at dawn they would be after us, we started to lead our horses out of the valley, but had no sooner started than we heard the Indians behind us.

"We continued our defense until about two o'clock, when we had killed thirty more Indians. This only left about forty to continue the pursuit, but they did not seem at all discouraged. If anything they were more active than ever.

"By this time our broken-down horses began to give way at the knees. Observing a narrow canyon we concluded to follow it, as it gave us a better defense than in the open. This canyon was narrow, with a swift stream running down it, and we made our way as far as we could, for two or three miles, when looking around, we saw immediately in our rear, the whole force of Indians. Matters were desperate. The canyon walls were high and nearly perpendicular for 300 feet, and growing narrower every mile. Suddenly, around a bend in the canyon, we saw a waterfall 200 feet high, completely blocking our exit."

Here Bridger paused. The captain, all aglow with excitement, cried anxiously, "Go on, Mr. Bridger, go on. How did you get out?"

"Oh, bless your soul, captain," answered Bridger, "we never did get out. The Indians killed us right there!"

This closed the interview. I have never known whether the captain included this story in his book.\*

#### COCHISE, WAR CHIEF OF THE CHIRACAHUAS

Cochise, the great war chief of the Chiracahua Apaches, died at Camp Bowie, A. T., June 8, 1874. He had been sick for about six weeks, and was reduced to a mere skeleton. He had an idea that he was bewitched, and in order to break the spell, the war chiefs and others, under the direction of the medicine man, kept up all the noise they could, by sing-

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\*This incident is taken from Gen. Anson Mills' book published in 1918.

ing and drumming on beef hides stretched over sticks, night and day, during his entire sickness.

He said that the spirits of the white men he had killed were haunting him. There is little doubt that his disease originated from drinking *tizwin*, which is made from ground corn, fermented and drunk in large quantities on an empty stomach. Indians frequently fast 48 hours before indulging, that the liquor may have the desired effect.

The morning after his death, Cochise was washed and painted in war style, placed on his favorite horse in front of one of his sub-chiefs, who supported the body, his four most noted sub-chiefs preceding and his family and others of the tribe following. They marched twelve miles to his grave, no one but those who were of the tribe's blood being allowed to attend. The grave was very large. On the bottom were laid blankets, and the chief was rolled up in a pair of very handsome ones of forty-two pounds weight, which had his name woven in the texture. The sides of the grave were walled up about three feet with stone. His rifle and arms, as well as other articles of value, were laid beside him. Above his body were placed more blankets, then mesquite poles resting on the walls of his grave. Covering these were skins, to prevent dirt falling through. Then the grave was filled with stones and dirt. His favorite horse was shot within 200 yards of the grave; another horse was killed about one mile distant and a third about two miles away, the idea being that he would find a horse when he needed one in the Spirit Land. The family and relatives destroyed all the clothing that they had, and the tribe destroyed all the stores on hand, so they were without food for about 48 hours.\*

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\*From the Army and Navy Journal of July 11, 1874. At one time I owned the cane which Gen. O. O. Howard gave Cochise in 1873, after one of their treaties.

## INDIANS SEEKING CHRISTIANITY

Some of the Coeur d' Alene Indians were among the first to embrace Christianity. It came about in the following manner:

A party of semi-civilized Iroquois from Canada made their way to the country of the Coeur d' Alenes, fraternizing with them. They told them of the many wonders in the white man's land; how they lived; of the great things they performed; their countless numbers, and, chief of all, their manner of living and their manner of reaching the Happy Hunting Grounds after death. They told the Coeur d' Alenes that the white man had a book, a "medicine" (the Bible) that would show every Indian the true trail to the Happy Hunting Grounds, where he would live forever in perfect happiness. After much discussion the Coeur d' Alenes resolved to procure a copy of this wonderful book, and a party was organized to go in search of it. They had no definite object in point, other than the vague East, where the Iroquois told them they could procure it. This little band, after traveling a long distance, came in contact with a war party, which attacked and killed some of them. The others escaped, and returning to their own people, related what had happened. Another and larger party was formed to continue the search for the white man's Bible. This party succeeded in reaching Fort Benton, where they sold some of their animals and skins to pay the passage of a few of them to St. Louis on the steamboat. Wandering about the city, they went with Pierre Chouteau, an old trapper, and by the use of the sign language, told him what they wanted. He took them to the "Jesuit fathers," among whom was one Father De Smet. They related to him what the Iroquois had told them, and enlisted his sympathy to such a degree that he asked and received permission from his superiors to accompany the Indians back to their country.

Father De Smet was one of the most remarkable men



of his day. A Belgian by birth, he came to the United States when a young man, and his entire after life was devoted to the spreading of Christianity among the Indians. Lake De Smet, in Wyoming, was named for him. I knew at Fort Washakie, Wyoming, a few Shoshone Indians whom he had converted to Christianity.\*

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#### INCREASE AND DECREASE OF INDIANS

The census taken in 1920 shows a decrease in the Indian population as enumerated. Nearly ten (10) per cent is probably to be accounted for in part by the enumeration as Indians in 1910, and as white in 1920, of certain persons having only slight traces of Indian blood. In 1910 a special effort was made to secure a complete enumeration of all persons having any perceptible amount of Indian blood, for the purpose of perpetuating a special report showing tribal relations, purity of Indian blood, etc., and it is probable that for this reason a considerable number of persons who would ordinarily have been reported as white were enumerated as Indians. The assumption is borne out by a comparison of the totals shown for the Indian population the last four times the census was taken, the only ones at which a complete enumeration of the Indian population has been attempted.

There were, in 1920, 242,950 Indians in the United States; in 1910, 265,683; in 1900, 237,196; in 1890, 248,253. Of the total decrease in the Indian population between 1910 and 1920, amounting to 22,734, the greater part took place in Oklahoma alone. The only prominent increase was reported for North Carolina—from 7851 to 11,824. The only states which had, in 1920, 1000 or more Indian inhabitants, and which reported increases in Indian population, were Louisiana, Texas, Montana, Oregon and California.

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\*Facts taken from Humphreyville's "Twenty Years Among Our Hostile Indians."

There are Indians in every state in the Union, but Delaware, Vermont, New Hampshire and West Virginia each have less than fifty.

The Indian has made vast strides in agriculture in the past ten years. The early explorers of this country found the Indian cultivating the soil, although the women did most of the work, the men being engaged in hunting and fishing when not on the warpath. Of later years the women have confined themselves largely to household affairs. The census report for 1920 states that 36,459 Indians cultivated 762,126 acres of land, produced crops worth \$11,037,589, as compared with 28,051 Indians who cultivated 558,503 acres in 1912, worth \$3,250,288. In the opinion of the author this all would have been accomplished years ago if the Indian question had been judiciously handled.

The figures of the Indian census taken in 1920 are of great ethnological interest, and I wish that I could devote more space to it and go into the matter more thoroughly.

## CHAPTER LIX

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### APPOINTMENT AS INDIAN AGENT



IN 1892 I was appointed Indian agent by President Cleveland for the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, being stationed at Darlington, Indian Territory, but held the appointment only a short time, having to resign because of ill-health. This I regretted very much.

On being relieved as Indian agent, I joined my new troop, G, 5th Cavalry, at Fort Brown, Texas, remaining there more than four years.

A short time before leaving Darlington agency, on one of the ration days, when several hundred women and children were drawing rations, one of the squaws asked me if I intended to leave them, and when I told her that I was obliged to go on account of my health, she informed me that the Indians were all very sorry that I was going away, because I had been good and kind to them. She then told these people and they all commenced to moan and cry, which needless to say, made me feel very bad.

I had previously asked to be relieved because of my ill-health, and a reply came from the Interior Department advising that they were disinclined to relieve me, and urged me to stay, stating that I had excellent control over the Indians. I then sent a second letter, supported by certificates from two physicians to the effect that my health was such as to compel me to go.

### MY WORK IN PORTO RICO

At the outbreak of the Spanish War in 1898, my regiment, the Fifth Cavalry, was ordered to Porto Rico, arriving there in September. My troop (G) was ordered to





Trumpeter George Little Bear, Arapahoe Indian.



Aiboneto, a town of 2200 inhabitants, situated on the military road, about half way between San Juan and Ponce.

I was in Aiboneto during the hurricane of 1899, in which my barracks, stables, hospital and storehouse were blown down. They were all new buildings. The walls of the barracks were eighteen inches in thickness. Fortunately no one was injured. In the town and vicinity 128 persons were killed and seriously injured. When my barracks were about to collapse I ordered my men to save themselves. Some of them went to town and did noble work in saving the people. They carried several women and children into the church. When I visited it in the evening it contained about 1000 persons. I had charge of issuing the rations and clothing to the destitute. My districts were Aiboneto, Barranquitas, Barros and Camero, which contained a population of about 75,000. The industries in my district were principally coffee and tobacco. I put up nearly one hundred houses, repairing many others, and built a hospital to hold thirty-two beds. I was in Aiboneto in 1916, and found the hospital still in use. I paid for the labor and material by issuing rations to the men employed, and also gave rations for the lumber. I had similar work at Barranquitas and Barrios. Sergeant Patrick Collins of my troop had charge of the rations at Barranquitas. He did splendid work, receiving a vote of thanks from the citizens. I had a detachment of men stationed at each of these places, and had to inspect them frequently. There was only a trail leading to Barranquitas and Barrios, and everything to and from those places had to be transported by pack animals. The trail in many places during the rainy season was almost impassable.

I suggested to the Alcalde (mayor) the proposition of putting a few men at work on the bad places, and I would pay for their labor in rations. My proposition was readily accepted. Upon inspecting their work, they had done so well that I gradually increased the number of men to over a

hundred. I allowed only one or two men or boys in a family to work, and they were not allowed to work but a week. I did this in order to spread the work around so as to give the greatest possible number who desired a chance to earn the rations.

Shortly after the rations gave out our governor, Allen, made an extended trip through the island and I accompanied him. The people of both towns gave him a big reception, and presented a large petition pleading for a road. The Spaniards, some years previously, had surveyed a road, but did very little work on it. The governor told them it was a question of money, as they were spending large sums in public improvements. He told them if I would take charge of the work (having seen what I had accomplished with only the tools that the natives brought with them), that he would try to help them out. He could not promise to complete the road, but would give them some money to furnish the people with employment. Shortly after, I was notified that a certain amount of money would be placed to my credit. The money was received and I went to work. The funds came along in driblets, and then I was notified that no more funds could be supplied me at present; so I turned in my tools that had been furnished by the public workers and made my arrangements to leave the island. This was in May, 1900. Just as I was about leaving I was informed by the Board of Public Works that they could spare me a little more money. I decided not to return, which I have always regretted, for no more work was done on the road for several years.

During my work on the road the Fifth Cavalry was ordered to the states and I remained behind at the request of Governor Allen. Before I left I was given a reception at Barranquitas. A brass band and the city *concejales* (council) met me at the outskirts of the town and escorted me to the public building where the school children had assembled

in charge of their teachers, where they sang a song commending my work on the road, which was written for the occasion. I should judge by the throng that there were fully a thousand people assembled. Speeches were made and a banquet was given me, followed by a dance that evening. I was also given a set of resolutions signed by a great many women, thanking me for my work for the hurricane sufferers and for my road work.

The following letters and newspaper clipping speak for themselves:

WILLIAM H. ELLIOTT

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR OF PORTO RICO  
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
SAN JUAN

April 9th, 1901.

PERSONAL.

My dear Captain:—

Upon the eve of your departure from Porto Rico I deem it not only incumbent upon me, with knowledge of the character and good results of your efforts to better the condition of the people in the vicinity of Aiboneto, where you have been stationed, but esteem it a pleasure to bear testimony to the value of your services.

I sincerely regret that it was not possible for this department to place at your disposal means sufficient for you to complete the construction of the road between Aiboneto and Barranquitas—a work in which you took deep interest and prosecuted with rare intelligence and economy. But I am pleased to assure you that the highway will be finished at an early date, and the people will know that the forwardness of the work as left by you has made it possible for it to be completed.

Wishing you a safe voyage, an enjoyable leave of absence and good fortune wherever you may go, I am,

Very respectfully,

(Signed) WILLIAM H. ELLIOTT.

Capt. H. W. Wheeler, 5th U. S. Cavalry,  
San Juan, Porto Rico.

A TRUE COPY:

Captain 11th Cavalry.

The Secretary of the Town Council of Barranquitas hereby certifies:

D. José Felix Colon  
—Alcalde—

—Concejales—

D. Manuel Yorres  
D. Felipe Colon Hoyos  
D. Placido Roduques  
D. Luciano Collaso  
D. Juan Bta Pagan

Secretario

D. Pio Colon Ortiz

That in the session of said Council which took place today, the gentleman named in the margin being present, the following ordinance was adopted:

A petition signed by a large number of citizens was presented and read. It was requested that the council change the name of "Comercio street" to "Capitan Wheeler street," as a slight token of gratitude to that gentleman for the great work he has done in behalf of the town.

The Council made said petition an ordinance, and adopted it unanimously. Comercio street will henceforth be called "Capitan Wheeler street."

It was further agreed that a copy of this ordinance be presented to the Capitan.

In complying with this and with the endorsement of the mayor, I hereby signed the above.

(Signed)

PIO COLON,  
Secretary.

Jose Felix Colon,  
Mayor.

A TRUE COPY:  
Captain and Adjutant 11th Cavalry.

### CLIPPING FROM THE "RAILROAD GAZETTE" NOVEMBER 23, 1900.

### EXTRACT FROM "AMERICAN ROAD-BUILDERS IN PORTO RICO," By ALBERT WELLS BUEL.

(This work was done during the first occupation of Porto Rico by United States troops in 1898-'99.)

\*\*\*\*Besides the work already described, there has been a certain amount of rough grading, paid for in rations, (known in the vernacular as "relief beans") by the Commissary Department of the United States army. The best piece of work of this work was done by Capt. H. W. Wheeler of the Fifth Cavalry, who attacked the wretched mountain trail, difficult even for

ponies, between Aiboneto, Barranquitas and Barrios, and succeeded in putting through a graded road on the whole distance of about sixteen miles, except for about three miles in one place and half a mile in another. The hiatus exists solely because the "relief" was withdrawn. Some of the energy and push which must have been back of this effort may be conceived when it is understood that practically all of the work was performed with hoes, which the peons possessed, since Captain Wheeler had but twelve shovels available and no other tools or plant of any sort. This road is marked on the map as "relief beans."

The standard sections for typical locations show very heavy work, and highways in Porto Rico cannot be built for much less than \$15,000 a mile. The maximum gradient on the mountain roads is 7 per cent and the minimum curvature 60 feet radius; that portion of the road between San Juan and Ponce, which was built before the American occupation, has gradients of 8 1-2 and 9 per cent.

# ITEM FROM NEW YORK EVENING POST, SEPT. 23, 1911 POST TRADER TO COLONEL

## COL. H. W. WHEELER'S RECORD IN THE ARMY

He Will Leave Active Service Next Week; Another Artillery  
Officer Voluntarily Retires.

Col. Homer Webster Wheeler, an additional officer in his grade in the cavalry, leaves active service on his own application next Saturday. Col. Wheeler is not a West Pointer, nor did he serve in the ranks in the army, but was a post trader in Kansas when he received his appointment as a second lieutenant. He was born in Vermont, May 13, 1848, and removed at an early age to Kansas, where he soon won favorable attention by frequent volunteer service with the regular troops in their campaigns against hostile Indians. His most important service was with Capt. Henry C. Bankhead's expedition, which was dispatched to the rescue of Major Geo. A. Forsyth's command on the Arickaree Fork of the Republican river in the fall of 1868.

In April, 1875, Gen. John Pope, who had his headquarters in Fort Leavenworth, was advised that a party of Cheyennes had crossed the Arkansas river west of Fort Dodge, and were attempting to make their way across the Platte into the Sioux country. In this band were some of the Indians who had murdered part of the Germaine family a year before. A detachment of soldiers under Lieut. Austin Henely, 6th Cavalry, was sent out after the Cheyennes. Col. Wheeler was then the post trader at Fort Wallace. He left his business and volunteered to accompany the detachment as guide. This young post trader located the Indian camp, being the first to discover it in the morning, and, although not expected to take part in the fight, was always on the skirmish line, and showed great courage and activity. He was highly commended in department orders for good judgment and conspicuous gallantry on that occasion, and having shown willingness to



surrender his tradership at Fort Wallace for a commission in the army, President Grant appointed him a second lieutenant in the Fifth Cavalry in October, 1875.

Lieut. Wheeler joined his company at Fort Lyon, Colorado, in December of that year, where he had station, with occasional tours of field service, until July, 1876, when he was transferred to Fort Robinson, Nebr. He joined the Powder River Expedition in November, 1876, taking part in the action at Bates Creek, where he was conspicuous for gallant and valuable services. He had station at Fort D. A. Russell until May, 1877, when he entered upon a tour of field service in northern Wyoming. Lieut. Wheeler participated in the operations against the hostile Nez Perces and served with the escort for Lieut.-Gen. Sheridan from Fort Washakie, Wyoming, by way of the Big Horn mountains, to Fort Custer, Mont. While stationed at Fort Washakie in the spring of 1879, he captured the remnant of the Bannock Indians remaining at large at the end of hostilities with that tribe.

From fighting Indians he was sent to the Infantry and Cavalry school, from which he was graduated in 1883. He became a first lieutenant in 1884, captain in 1893, and major 9th Cavalry in October, 1902, after a service of twenty-seven years in the Fifth Cavalry. He did not remain with the Ninth Cavalry very long as he was transferred to the 11th Cavalry in December, 1902. He became lieutenant-colonel of the Fifth Cavalry in 1910, and received his colonelcy last March.



Western  
Americans

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- Wheeler, Homer Webster, 1848-  
The frontier trail; or, From cowboy to colonel:  
an authentic narrative of forty-three years in the  
old West as cattleman, Indian fighter, and army  
officer, by Colonel Homer W. Wheeler. With an  
introduction by Major-General James G. Harbord.  
Los Angeles, Times-mirror Press, 1923.  
334p. illus. 24cm.  
Author's autographed presentation copy to  
Helen Wheeler Bassett.
1. Frontier and pioneer life-The West. 2. Indians of North  
America-The West. 3. Indians of North America-Wars-1866-  
1895. I. Title.



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